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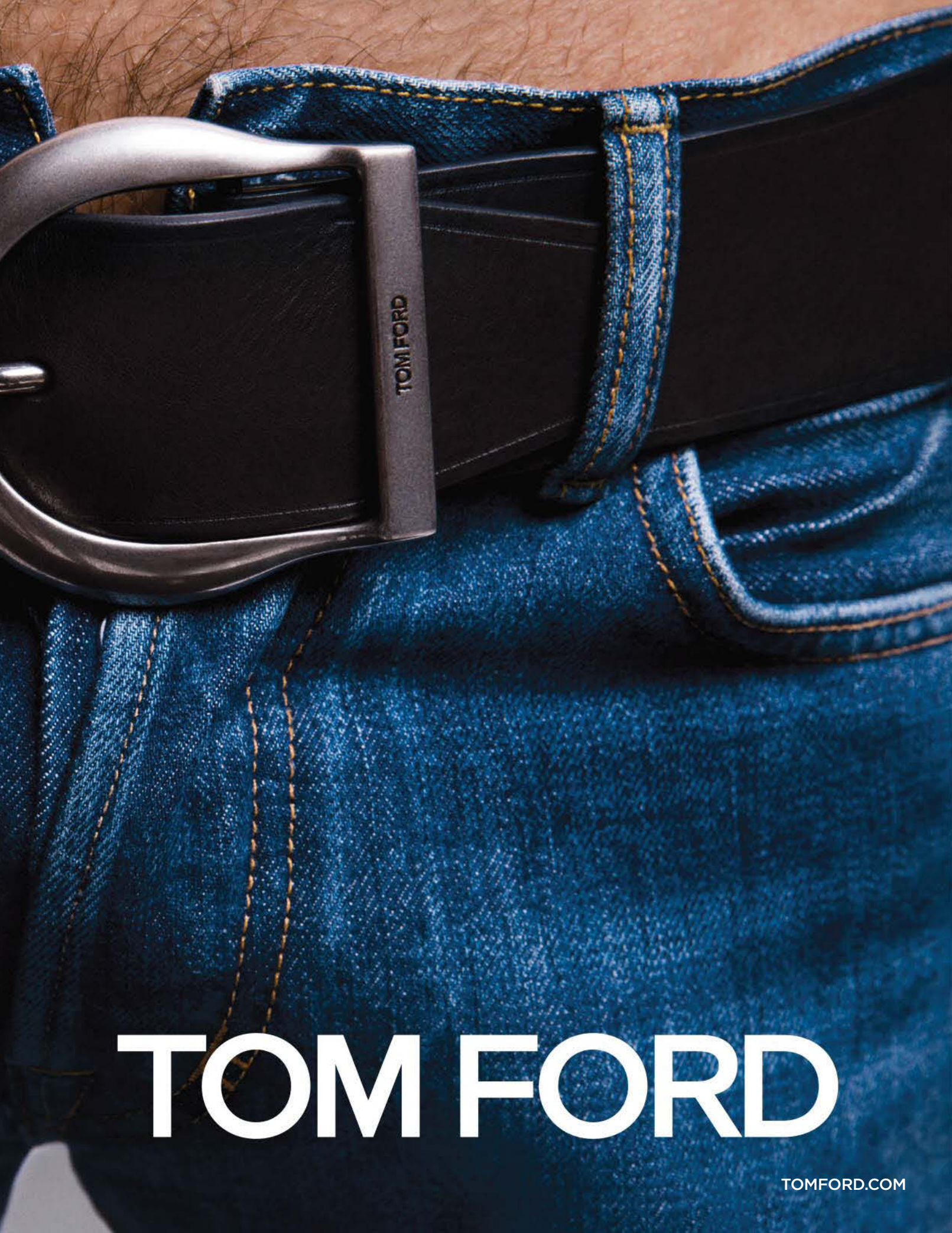
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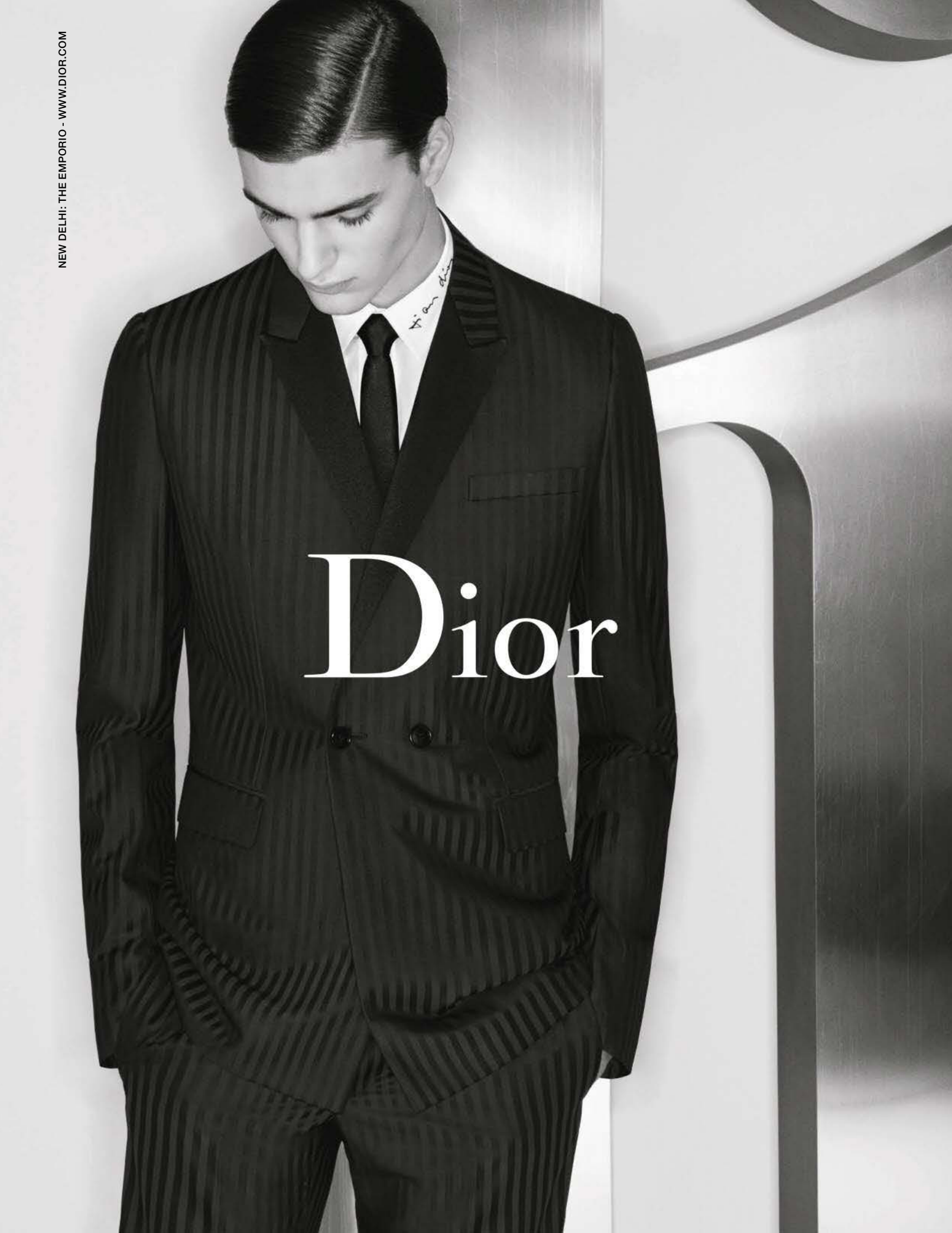


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Letter from the Editor



Style evolution

Few men harness the power of style better than the Indian cricket vice captain. This wasn't always the case. When he broke onto the big stage in 2011, Virat Kohli dressed like a frat boy: flashy shades, spiked hair, cocked-up collared polos, chubby cheeks, track pants and beach slippers – a jock style replicated by men across the country. But even back then, Kohli displayed flashes of sartorial flair, and an innate understanding of how to enhance his image. And by upping his game he's shown just how lucrative things can turn out: There's a reason brands are lining up outside his vanity van to cut him cheques, and it doesn't all have to do with his batting record. What these companies know is that Virat – with his slasher haircut, tats and cropped pants – is the perfect product of this age, representing the aspirations of millions of young Indians to whom the defensive anti-fashion baggage of the past means nothing. Substance without style still works – someone like R Ashwin proves this – but when you have both, the possibilities are limitless.

One of our primary missions at *GQ* is to help Indian men develop and enhance their personal style because, as Virat has shown, nailing your look pays big time – at both work and play. As a result, Indian men have smartened up their acts – ask the ladies if they're willing to tolerate slobs any longer. Which is why I'm delighted to present in this issue a showcase of the most significant menswear looks of this Spring/Summer season. Our editors travelled all over Europe to witness runway collections and then break down the most relevant trends to keep you on point. And even though he's not the most bookish character on the planet, I know one person who will be reading these pages carefully and making lots of notes: Virat Kohli.

Enjoy the issue.

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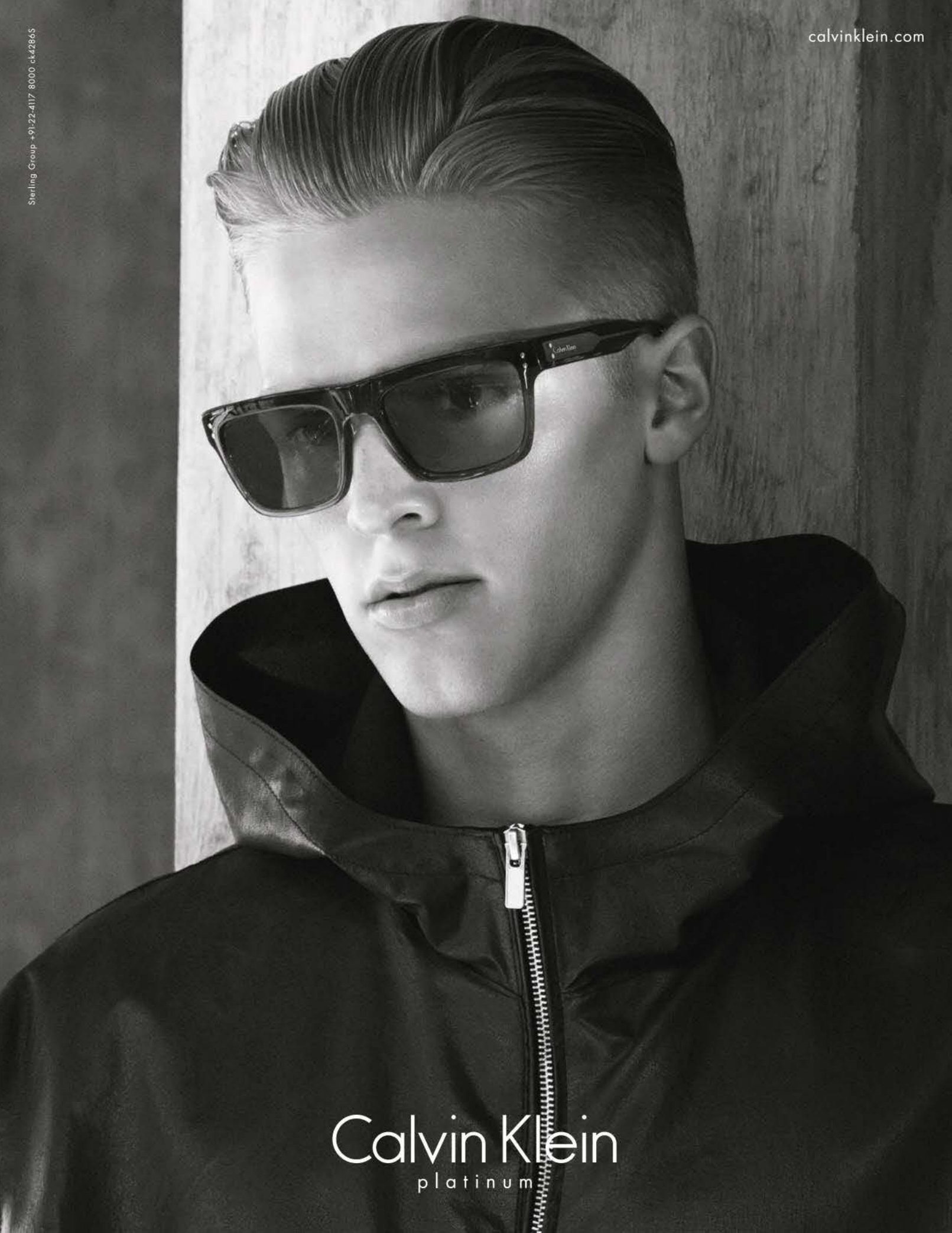








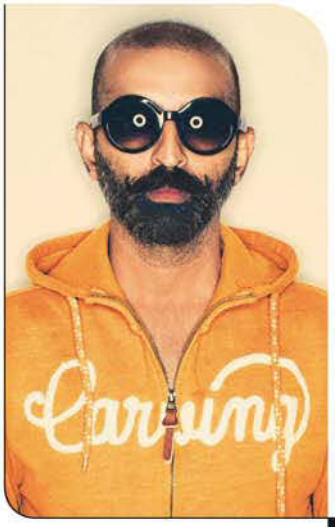
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GQ Contributors



MANISH MANSINH

WHO: Photographer
WHAT: Shoots this month's Gentlemen's Club, page 172
REVOLVING DOOR: Shooting this story is always a surprise. There are new people in new places and a new vibe, which keeps things spontaneous and organic.



ANISH TRIVEDI

WHO: Writer; producer of mix-tapes for bars
WHAT: How to accept your silver head of hair, page 222
TO ALL THE ANTI-GREY HAIR-ISTS OUT THERE: The last I checked, the "G" in *GQ* stood for Gentleman. We respect women. We can handle our alcohol. *GQ* is not about age. It's about attitude. Isn't that why George Clooney belongs on the cover?



ALEX SANCHEZ

WHO: Executive Chef at The Table, Mumbai
WHAT: Chronicles life in "Iron chef", page 189
THE BALANCE: Cheffing isn't easy. It's masochistic, and requires craziness, determination and a tolerance for both physical and mental pain. And no matter where you are, no matter what calibre of restaurant you work at, you're gonna get your ass grabbed. Grab-ass is the universal kitchen language.



CHARUDUTT CHITRAK

WHO: Photographer
WHAT: Captures cover star Virat Kohli, page 86
WHEN SPORT MEETS FASHION: Virat dares to experiment and is always open to trying new things.

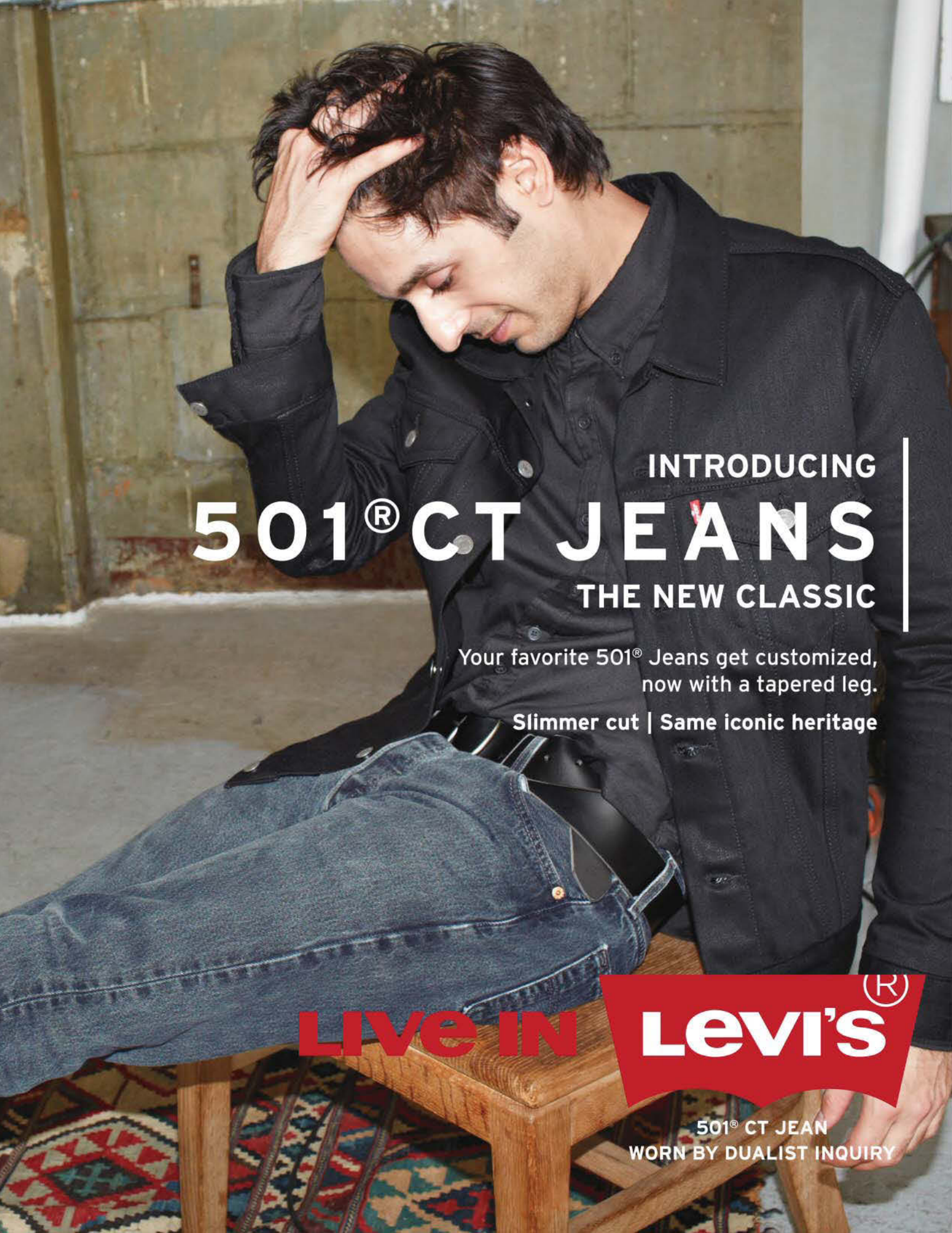


SHIVANGI LOLAYEKAR

WHO: Fashion Features Editor, *GQ* India
WHAT: Curates Spring/Summer's most important trends in "What to wear now", page 121
FORGET-ME-NOT BLUES: I love that denim is all over the runway this season. It signals a new style that's accessible and manly, versus the crazy fashion that only a few people can pull off.


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WHAT'S NEW ON

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How to buy a second home

VIRAT KOHLI

The Great Indian Hope



Women we love

EXCLUSIVE



Erika Packard

The Hottest Cricket WAGS



PHOTO: TARUN VISHWA (ANUSHKA); IMAGE: REX FEATURES (JESSICA), GETTY IMAGES (DEEPIKA, SECOND HOMES)



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Not the usual.

CÎROC FILMFARE Glamour & Style awards

Event: Mumbai, 26th Feb 2015. **f/cirocindia**
Watch it on 14th March, 8 pm on Zoom.

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YOUR EXCLUSIVE PASS TO THE MOST HAPPENING PARTIES AND EVENTS



Sunil Sethi, Sanjay Guleria, Arjun Mehra & Tarun Tahiliani



Gautam Kalra & Harathi Reddy



Nikhil & Vidushi Mehra

Akhil Nath



Atsu Sekhose

A PARTY INDEED!

WHAT: *GQ* Bar Night in association with Johnnie Walker Blue Label

WHERE: Olive Bar and Kitchen, Mehrauli, Delhi

Delhi's swish set descended upon the Olive Bar & Kitchen to celebrate the return of *GQ* Bar Night. The stars of the capital's fashion industry, including Tarun Tahiliani and JJ Valaya, hobnobbed with young turks like Atsu Sekhose and Shivan & Narresh. AD Singh held court with designer Nikhil Mehra and the gorgeous Karan sisters, Gauri and Nainika. In other words, it was the perfect *GQ* night.



Saurabh Dewan, Vikram Jain, Kritika Sahni & Almona Bhatia





AD Singh



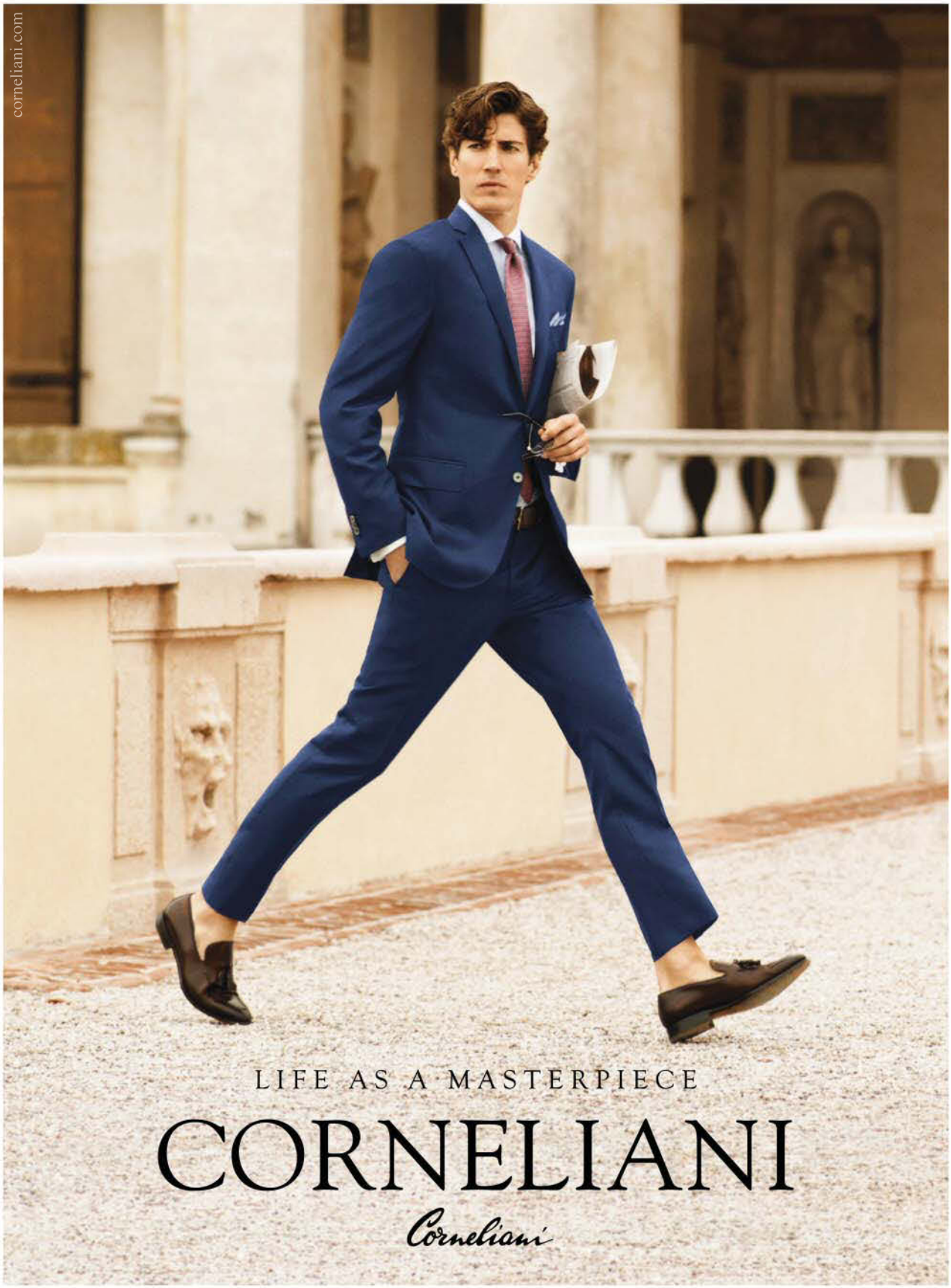
Shivan Bhatiya & Narresh Kukreja





Vikrum Baidyanath, Anand Bhushan, Kalol Dutta, Prashant Varma & Rimzim Dadu

PHOTO: STORIES IN MOTION, GULSHAN SACHDEVA



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Nainika & Gauri Karan


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Venus Singh

PHOTO: STORIES IN MOTION, GULSHAN SACHDEVA



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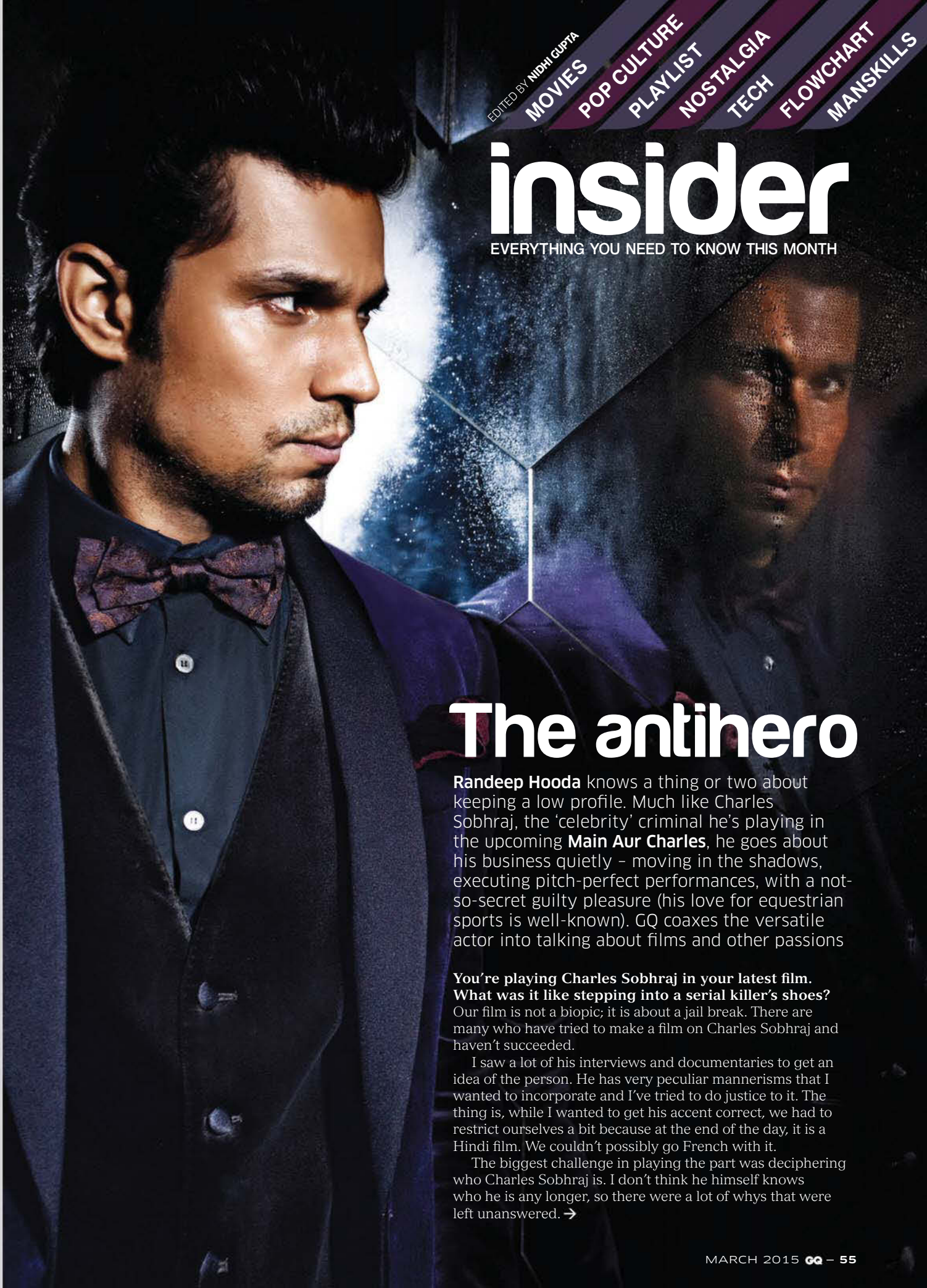
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insider

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW THIS MONTH



The antihero

Randeep Hooda knows a thing or two about keeping a low profile. Much like Charles Sobhraj, the 'celebrity' criminal he's playing in the upcoming **Main Aur Charles**, he goes about his business quietly – moving in the shadows, executing pitch-perfect performances, with a not-so-secret guilty pleasure (his love for equestrian sports is well-known). GQ coaxes the versatile actor into talking about films and other passions

You're playing Charles Sobhraj in your latest film. What was it like stepping into a serial killer's shoes?
Our film is not a biopic; it is about a jail break. There are many who have tried to make a film on Charles Sobhraj and haven't succeeded.

I saw a lot of his interviews and documentaries to get an idea of the person. He has very peculiar mannerisms that I wanted to incorporate and I've tried to do justice to it. The thing is, while I wanted to get his accent correct, we had to restrict ourselves a bit because at the end of the day, it is a Hindi film. We couldn't possibly go French with it.

The biggest challenge in playing the part was deciphering who Charles Sobhraj is. I don't think he himself knows who he is any longer, so there were a lot of whys that were left unanswered. →

INTERVIEW: NIDHI GUPTA; PHOTO: RAM SHERGILL



Stills from the film *Main Aur Charles*; *inset:* Charles Sobhraj

You tend to play characters with shades of grey. Is this why you took on this role?
Prawaal Raman [the director] had approached me with a script based on Sobhraj some six years ago. Then, the idea was to have three different people playing Charles, each a different interpretation of the man. I categorically told him that when he thinks of making it about one Charles, he can come back to me.

There were a lot of issues in getting financers, there were a lot of other actors being approached for the role too, but Raman was pretty certain he wanted me to be a part of it. When we were shooting in Goa, there were some people who came to the sets and claimed to have met the real Charles Sobhraj. And they thought I was him. That was a big compliment.

What has been the most challenging role of your nearly 15-year-long career?
I take every role as a challenge. Some might have been more popular than others, but I have given each of them equal sweat and blood. Though, yes, Sobhraj, with all his myriad interpretations, is up there.

Many might say that your performance in *Highway* was your best.
It was bloody depressing being a part of *Highway* – the character was such. As an actor, of course, I got a chance to work with A-listers in every sphere, be it the director [Imtiaz Ali] or AR Rahman [the music producer]. It was a big deal to be a part of that league. But honestly, Mahabir Bhati was a brute, and yet all these girls were falling head over heels for him. That was flattering but, like I told all those girls on Twitter who were wishing to be kidnapped by someone like him: not every guy is like Mahabir, not even me, so it's best not to wish for something like that.

And then you played artist Raja Ravi Varma in *Rang Rasiya*.
Rang Rasiya was one project I had a lot of faith in from the very beginning; after all, it was a story about an iconic legend. When we started working on it, it was to be in English and Hindi. I remember putting a lot of films on hold, knowing and believing that *Rang Rasiya* would be a game-changer.

And despite the delay in releasing it, when it finally hit theatres I was happy for Deepa and Ketan Mehta, more than anything else. A lot of my friends, on seeing the film, came out pleasantly surprised. No one really knew what to expect of it – and I guess that worked both for and against it.

Do you think it's time to play some less intense roles, then?
I think I'd like to do some love stories now. I like to stretch myself, and if that means doing a rom-com, why not?

You count Naseeruddin Shah among your mentors. What's the most important piece of advice he's given you?
"You cannot plan a career". And: "Don't try to act".

What's next for you?
I'm excited about Deepa Mehta's *Beeba Boys*. But this year, I'm actually looking forward to spending time with my family. I have a niece and nephews who I'd like to get to know a lot better.

INTERVIEW: NIDHI GUPTA; IMAGE: GETTY IMAGES (CHARLES SOBHRAJ)



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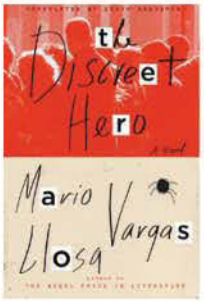
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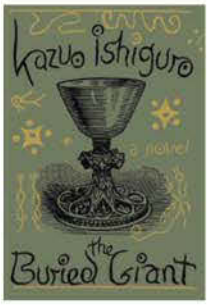
The creators of *Dark Souls* and *Demon's Soul* bring us yet another combat game where blood and gore rule the streets. You play a traveller who arrives in the gothic city of Y'harnam in search of a potent medical remedy, only to find its lanes full of malformed creatures that must be first exterminated. Faster combat and better weapons save this from being just another zombie fighter. Just watch out for the axe- and pitchfork-wielding mobs and burning corpses.
Available for PS4 on March 25

BOOKS



The Discreet Hero
Mario Vargas Llosa

From the prolific Peruvian Nobel laureate comes a story about a self-made man who receives an extortion threat, ignores it and instantly becomes a town hero – though none of it is as grand as it sounds. This is really a meditation on delinquent megalopolises, where affluence and poverty are in friction. Nothing short of literary (read: dead serious) fiction, pick it up if you're feeling particularly valiant.



The Buried Giant
Kazuo Ishiguro

How does a Booker prize-winning author take ten years to put out a novel? Ishiguro scrapped the first draft of this predictably powerful saga because his wife disapproved of it. Which is just fine, because a story about an old couple stepping out of their homes in post-war Britain to find their long-lost son can't have been all that easy to tackle. Who's betting the film rights for this are already sold?

MUSIC



Rebel Heart
Madonna

Trust the Queen of Pop to court controversy before she's even put out her new album. The "Ratchit" has alreay made a fuss about her demos being leaked online, and photoshopped facial bondage onto the faces of iconic world leaders – including Martin Luther King Jr, Nelson Mandela and Jesus. We're sure there will be more drama before *Rebel Heart* is finally available for our ears, but honestly, Madonna, you're getting a little too preachy these days.



Policy
Will Butler

There's Arcade Fire, that American/Canadian indie rock band that's been on everyone's on-loop listen list for a while now. And then there's Will Butler who, apparently buoyed by an Oscar nomination (for *Her*'s soundtrack), decided to go solo last year. On his debut album, he's going for spazzy, jumpy, wired, frenzied feels. Not for him the supersymmetry of his erstwhile band, clearly.

Eclipse
Twin Shadow

For a singer who started his career as a choirboy, George Lewis Jr's music as Twin Shadow makes a compelling case for becoming devout followers of synthpop. And he's turning it up with *Eclipse*, his third solo album (after *Forget* and *Confess)* in four years, where you'll find his honey voice sliding along keyboards and guitar riffs. This one's right up our orbit.



WORDS: NIDHI GUPTA


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EVENT

SXSW 2015

Austin, Texas; March 13-22

Pack your bags and head to Austin for the 10-day convention that, in its 28th year, is packing a pretty big punch – featuring performances from a plethora of musicians including Twin Shadow, Songhoy Blues, Gang of Four and Surfer Blood; a film festival in which the year's most anticipated flicks will compete for several titles; speakers like Mark Duplass (*Jeff, Who Lives At Home*), Shekhar Kapur, Ava DuVernay (*Selma*), Malcolm Gladwell and music producer RZA; and interactive sessions on social media and technology. This is probably going to be a much more enriching experience than your annual drug-laced, EDM-laden beach ball.

FILM

UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL

Biopics. What's not to like about them? Readymade plotlines and straight-faced screenplays make for generally sincere – and often brilliant – tributes (discounting smear parades like *The Doors* and, more recently, *Edgar*). Remember *I'm Not There* and *Malcolm X*? And in this age of CGI and 4D, chances are biopics will never be boring (we're looking at you, Mr Eastwood).

We've counted about 20 films in this genre across Hollywood and Bollywood so far this year. Call 'em lazy if you will, but if there's a man – alive or dead – with a compelling story, there's a film-maker volunteering to tell it. And the toughest call on these is deciding who to cast. Bollywood seems to have its panties in a bunch fishing for actors: What else do you call it when Ranbir Kapoor's playing Kishore Kumar, Sanjay Dutt and (possibly) hockey star Dhyan Chand in three different films? But there are others: We pick the extraordinary men, and their far-more-convincing actor pairings, that you must watch out for in 2015.





MS DHONI: AN UNTOLD STORY
By Neeraj Pandey

Sushant Singh Rajput plays Dhoni, Indian cricket's most celebrated captain. And that's a good thing 'cause we already know that Rajput looks good on the field (think *Kai Po Che*).

ROCKETMAN
By Michael Gracey

The star of *Mad Max: Fury Road* and *Suicide Squad* to play Elton John? This oughta be good, because just look at Tom Hardy: that ripped bod certainly isn't a candle in the wind.









BLACK MASS
By Scott Cooper

There can never be enough gangster action on screens. Johnny Depp plays the infamous Whitey Bulger, brother of a state senator and the most violent criminal in the history of South Boston. Just give him an Oscar already.

THE END OF THE TOUR
By James Ponsoldt

Jesse Eisenberg narrates his adventures as a magazine reporter following author David Foster Wallace on a book tour. Who's being played by none other than Jason Segel. There's some infinite jest for you.









THE WALK
By Robert Zemeckis

French high-wire artist Phillippe Petit walked between the WTC Twin Towers in 1974. Joseph Gordon-Levitt can certainly pull it off in 2015. And, with no batmobile – or towers, really – won't this be quite the stunt?

WORDS: NIDHI GUPTA; IMAGE: REX FEATURES, CORBIS, GETTY IMAGES

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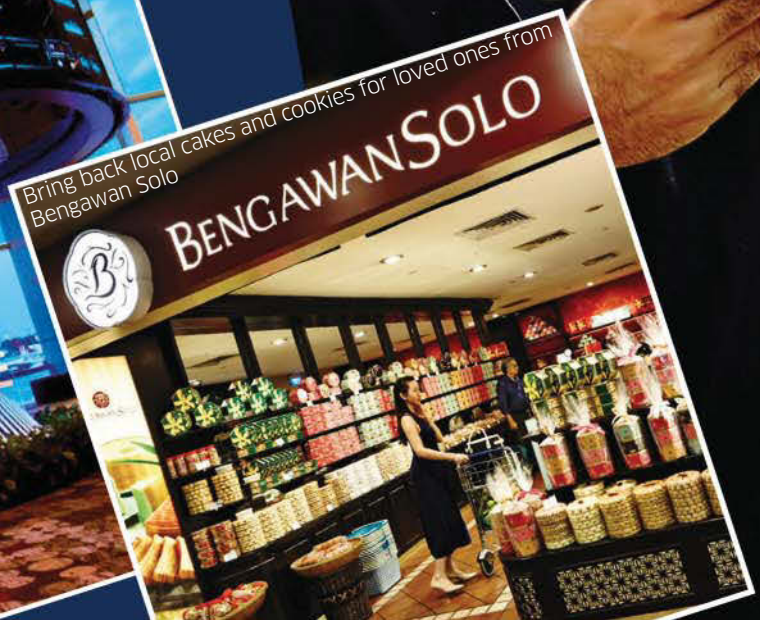
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Bring back local cakes and cookies for loved ones from Bengawan Solo

PHOTOGRAPHER: ARJUN MARK; STYLIST: TANYA VOHRA; HAIR & MAKE-UP: SHIMSHA HETTY; FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: BLAZER BY GIORGIO ARMANI, POLO T-SHIRT BY RIVER ISLAND; VIRS TRIP WAS SUPPORTED BY THE SINGAPORE TOURISM BOARD AND THE CHANGI AIRPORT GROUP



EAT. PLAY. FLY

SINGAPORE CHANGI AIRPORT

If Singapore took Vir's breath away, Singapore Changi Airport did him one bigger. Ask Vir, and he admits a few hours here were not nearly enough. He walks, rides and swims around Singapore Changi Airport like a little boy left loose in a chocolate factory. First stop, he made a beeline for the iShopChangi counter to pick up his pre-departure purchases that were already packed and waiting for him. Still, he simply couldn't resist splurging unapologetically at Changi's luxurious shopping street. Gluttony strikes as he whisks through Singapore Food Street, one eatery at a time before visiting the popular Bengawan Solo to indulge his sweet tooth. He takes a stroll through the airport's stunning Sunflower Garden, and with more than one thing left on his Changi Airport checklist, he makes a speedy stop at The Social Tree, the airport's iconic social media structure. With just minutes to spare, he boards the plane, looking back and thinking, "I wish I had more time"!

Catch a breather at Singapore Changi Airport's Sunflower Garden in Terminal 2



Give your mo some TLC at The Panic Room

PHOTOGRAPHER: ARJUN MARK; STYLIST: TANYA VOHRA; HAIR & MAKE-UP: SHIMSHA SHETTY; FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: T-SHIRT BY FRENCH KICK; JEANS BY CALVIN KLEIN, SHOES BY LOUIS LEEMAN; VIR'S TRIP WAS SUPPORTED BY THE SINGAPORE TOURISM BOARD AND THE CHANGI AIRPORT GROUP



Amp up your cool quotient with Krasnaya's cult watches


Indulge in a whisky shoe shine and sartorial splendour at Kevin Seah


Looking for exotic, flavourful teas? Look no further than TWG Tea



A trip to Orchard Road, Singapore's premier shopping district, is a must


At Haji Lane, indie designers and street cred go hand-in-hand

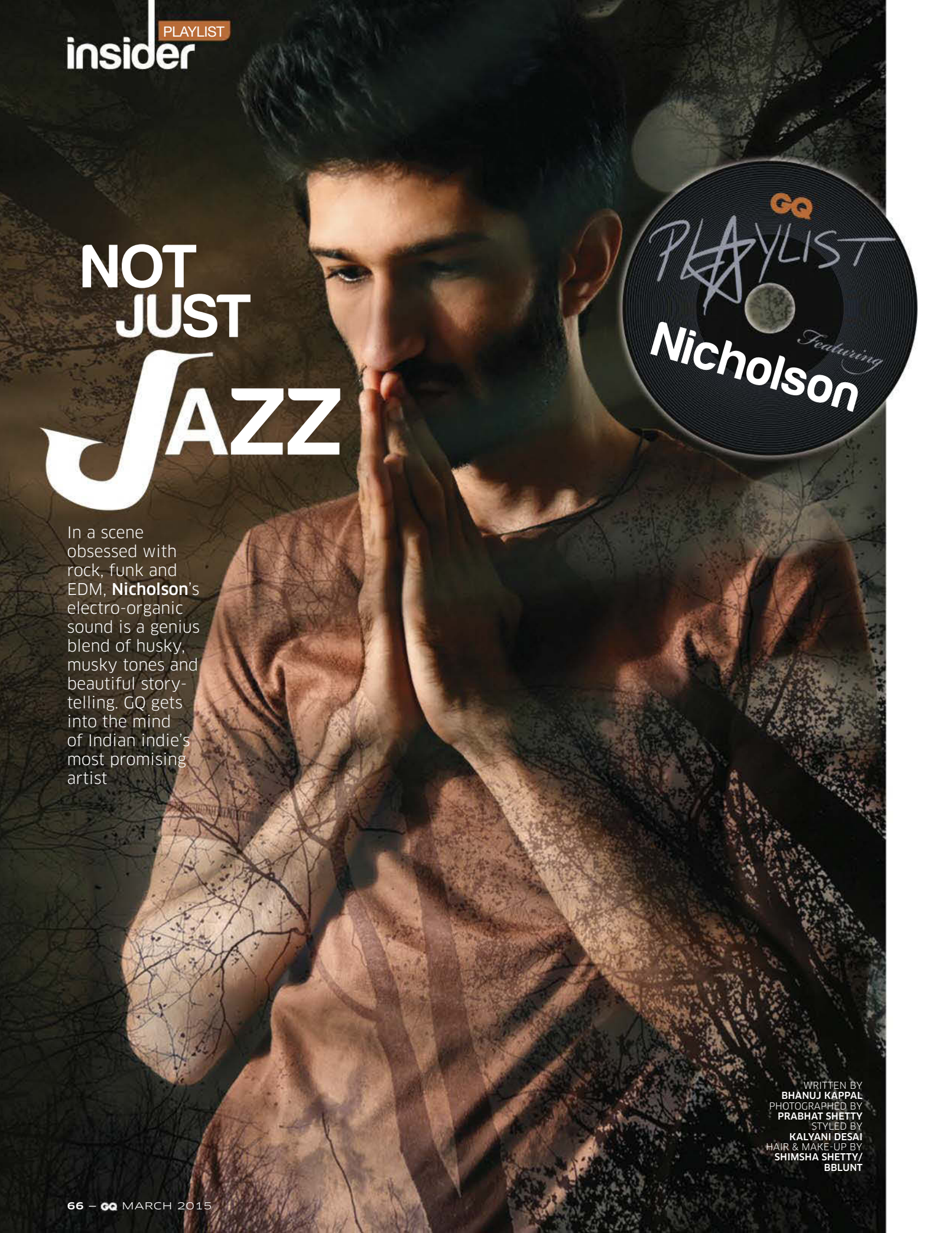

Stand out from the crowd with bespoke Singaporean styles from Keepers

SPLURGE 'N' SPRUCE UP

IN SINGAPORE

A man of style, Vir Das starts his day with a trendy haircut at The Panic Room, and then takes off on a pleasurable retail adventure. After enjoying luxury timepieces at Krasnaya Watch Gallery, he steps into Kevin Seah, a studio known for its bespoke clothing and trademark whisky shoe shine. Before taking a stroll down Haji Lane, an eclectic street lined with stores and cafés, Vir stops by ION Orchard, an exclusive mall situated on Orchard Road that features the world's best in shopping, dining, art and design. He then visits Keepers, Singapore's design collective, to browse through stunning designer wear. Vir's shopping spree concludes at TWG Tea, where he stocks up on exotic teas as souvenirs.

Log on to Youtube/INDIAGQ and watch as Vir Das brings you up to beat with Singapore's spectacular shopping scene



NOT JUST JAZZ

In a scene obsessed with rock, funk and EDM, **Nicholson**'s electro-organic sound is a genius blend of husky, musky tones and beautiful story-telling. GQ gets into the mind of Indian indie's most promising artist

WRITTEN BY
BHANUJ KAPPAL
PHOTOGRAPHED BY
PRABHAT SHETTY
STYLED BY
KALYANI DESAI
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It's rare enough for an artist to go from being an unknown debutant to scene darling in a span of six months. It's even more remarkable when that artist does it with laid-back, experimental electronica that's far removed from the 4x4 EDM dreck flooding our dance floors. But Nicholson has accomplished exactly that, effortlessly walking onto many year-end best-of lists on the strength of two fantastic EPs and a scintillating, constantly evolving live set. If you plotted out the 28-year-old Mumbai-based musician's career trajectory on a chart, it would be a straight line shooting for the stars. His critically acclaimed May 2014 debut *For What* – a warm, intimate EP anchored by lush piano chords and Nicholson's restrained, languid vocals – drew comparisons to James Blake and Joni Mitchell. He followed that up with a debut live performance alongside Sandunes at the NCPA's experimental theatre. And since then, he's put out well-received collaborations with Sandunes and Fuzzy Logic, released two critically acclaimed music videos and played at some of the biggest stages in the country, including NH7 Weekender and Magnetic Fields. Makes your 2014 seem a bit dull, doesn't it?

Unlike most debutants, Nicholson approaches interviews with the wariness of an old hand, steering conversation away from anything he considers off-topic and picking his words with careful consideration. "I've been misquoted and misrepresented too many times," he told me before this interview. In an indie scene that often comes across as hungry for publicity, it's refreshing (albeit a little frustrating) to come across an artist who doesn't jump at every opportunity to be in the spotlight. But he does open up when you shift the conversation to his work. Here's what he has to say about his music, his sophomore EP *Cold Water* (released last Christmas) and the ride so far.



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On the *GQ* India website:
Nicholson's exclusive Soundcloud playlist

You studied jazz piano for four years at St Francis Xavier University in Nova Scotia. How does that experience inform your more electronica-based work today?
More than one would probably think. I'm not actively using much of the vocabulary I learned in school, but I think the way I use harmony is quite jazz-influenced. I knew very quickly after going to St Francis Xavier that I didn't want to be a jazz musician; but the knowledge and the experience of other people who shared similar passions was priceless.

Tell us about the band that performs with you at live sets. How did it come together?
I heard that Cotton Press Studio was doing really interesting work around the time I was looking to record my first EP, so I went down and met with the partners. Rohan Ramanna, who plays drums for the live show, heard some of my stuff and offered to produce it (which was a blessing). JJ [Jehangir Jehangir] and Stuart [D'Costa] came on board as the Dirty Jays, prior to our launch at the NCPA.

They more than contribute to the live set; they *are* the live set. The sound would be totally different if my band was different. Rohan's production, in my opinion, is unmatched, and JJ and Stu are so versatile and have an innate ability to take creative control and write their own parts. The live show has all four of us stamped all over it.

Your videos (completely self-produced, we've heard) for "For What I" and "For What II" have been making waves.
I met with film-maker Sachin Pillai, about potentially making one video; we ended up shooting three. They're stories about people: the idea was to allow the viewer to resonate with abstract depictions of solitude, togetherness, conflict etc. We were very lucky when it came to casting. Everyone we had in mind for the videos agreed to do it: Saba Azad, Paloma Monnappa, Mihir Joglekar, Karan Pandit and Anjali Mody were all very generous.

The sound on your second EP *Cold Water* is a little different. What, if anything, has changed from your first?
I don't think anything's changed in terms of songwriting – but the process has changed a fair bit. I feel *Cold Water* was more in line with our live sound, a culmination of all our tastes. Collaboration does that, though. A lot of the time, the music tends to write itself in the rehearsal studio.



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The desi sleuth

He was no Karamchand, but **Byomkesh Bakshi** did it first: he brought the detective story to life on Indian TV. Twenty-two years after it first aired, National Award-winning actor **Rajit Kapur** reminisces about playing the character in technicolour



I clearly remember the day I walked into Basu Chatterjee's office: I was nervous, unsure, apprehensive. We spoke for not more than 10 minutes, during which his eyes never left my face. And just like that, the part was mine.

I was given complete, bound scripts for all the episodes within days (in pure Hindi). Basu-*da* welcomed any feedback on the language, but made it clear that discussions about the script would be closed during shooting.

The entire series was shot almost like a film (not episodically), from location to location – beginning with all the scenes set in my house (in Versova). Ninety per cent of the shoot took place in Bombay, the rest on the streets of Calcutta – these were exterior shots of entries and exits from various houses, where I'd be walking down streets and alleys, thoughtfully gazing at mansions and homes.

I was constantly changing clothes – between six to eight kurtas, embellished with an occasional waistcoat or shawl, the solitary white dhoti my one constant. This dhoti became synonymous with my character, as I would discover. I'd also keep track of the little things – such as my spectacles, chappals, watch – to maintain continuity. The thought of wearing the wrong kurta, of looking inconsistent in one scene or episode, unnerved me.

Byomkesh Bakshi premiered on DD on Thursdays at 9pm, the primetime slot.

Even before the third episode was aired, the show had been declared a national hit. And I began to be recognized on the streets.

At some point, some newspaper "accidentally" revealed my office address in an interview, and what followed was an avalanche – congratulatory messages, red heart-stickered greetings, invitations to functions from complete strangers, love letters, marriage proposals with seductive photographs, notes demanding I look into nefarious activities, complaints against the police, assurances of money to solve cases… The list is endless. The regular onslaught forced me to assign a staff member just to look through my mail!

Many of these fans wanted instant replies with signed photographs. Some wanted me to come to their town or village to solve cases – cases that included everything from theft to infidelity, murder to family disputes. One child even wrote in to solicit my help in exorcising a ghost in his house.

The friendly insistence with which people wrote in often scared me. They'd send such detailed accounts of incidents, never once realizing that I was playing an imaginary creation.

My visits to public places became even stranger. Eyes would follow me as if I was on the trail of a criminal. Often, at restaurants, inquisitive fans inquired whether the suspect was in the room. People would approach me and whisper their willingness to "help".

I am taken aback when people, even now, say: "Hey, there's Byomkesh!" Some confuse the name: Byomchandra, Bakshi detective, Bumkesh, Byombakshi, Biswasbom, Bankimbose, Bosebakshi, Byomkin, Bomkesariya, Venkatesh Babu. The variations are endless, but never malicious. They may not know my real name but they remember me as *that detective on TV*. They will recall episode details that I've long forgotten. Even today they ask me about the stories I no longer have a "clue" about.

Now, another generation is exposed to the series, via YouTube (and, next month, Dibakar Banerjee's feature film; *GQ* interview with the director on page 114). And even in this day, among the multiple renditions of Sherlock and Doctor Who, young minds seem fascinated by the character. He's the "Classic Detective" – and, even after 22 years, people call in to ask for the show to be reinstated. And so Byomkesh Bakshi continues to lurk in my shadow – or rather, I in his.

Dibakar Banerjee's Byomkesh Bakshi *is out on April 10*

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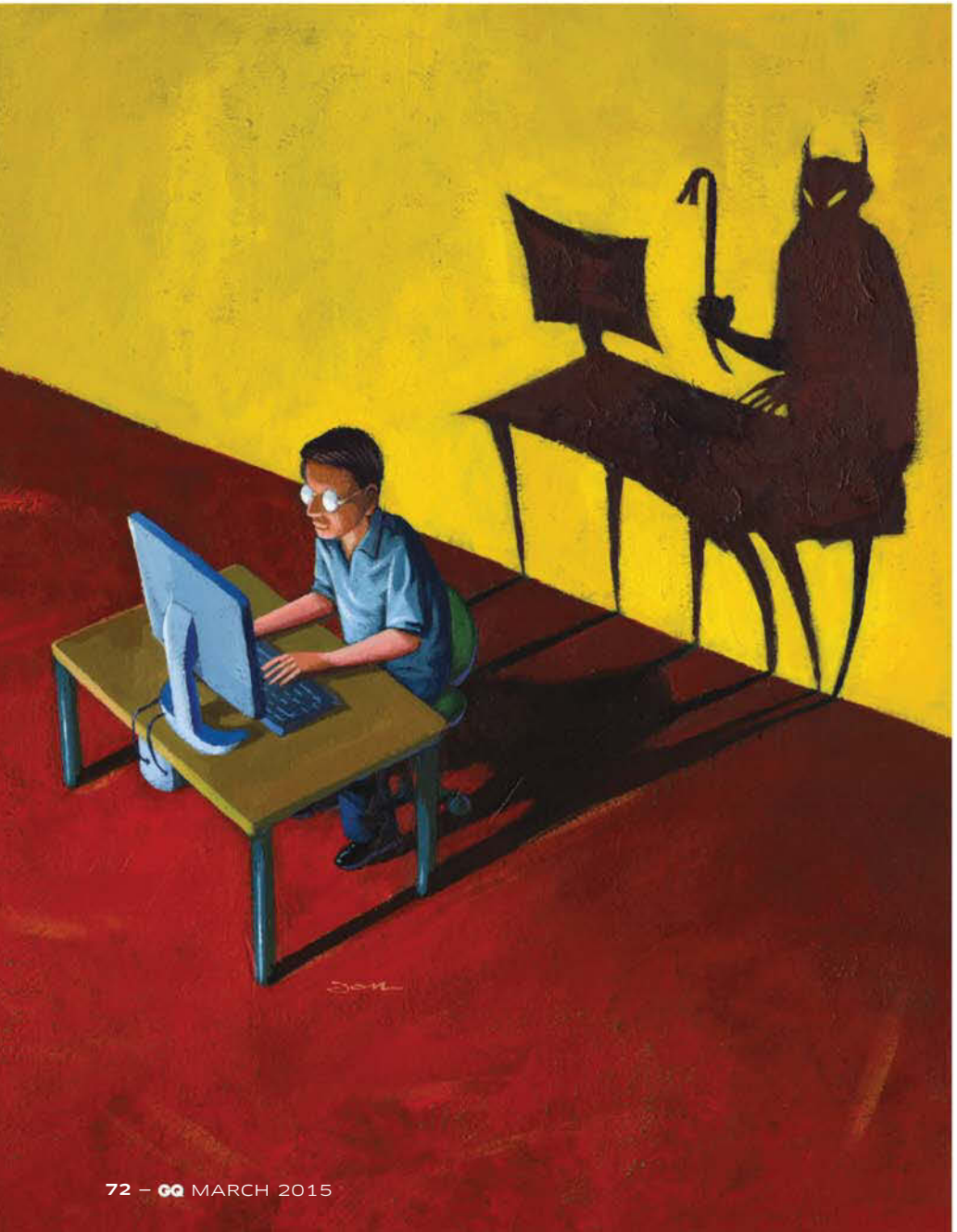


Play it cruel

Why it's smart to be mean online

I'm generally upbeat on Twitter. Many of my posts are enthusiastic blurts about science or research in which I use way too many exclamation points!! But I've noticed something: When I post an acerbic or cranky tweet, it gets recirculated far more widely than my cheerier notes. People like it fine when I'm genial, but when I make a caustic joke or cutting comment? Social media gold. This is pure anecdata, of course. Still, it made me wonder if there was any psychological machinery at work here. Is there a reason that purse-lipped opinions would outcompete generous ones?

Indeed, there is. It's called hypercriticism. When we hear negative statements, we think they're inherently more intelligent than positive ones. Teresa Amabile, Director of Research for Harvard Business School, began exploring this back in the Eighties. She took a group of 55 students, roughly half men, half women, and showed them excerpts from two book reviews printed in an issue of the *New York Times*. The same reviewer wrote both, but Amabile anonymized them and tweaked the language to produce two versions of each – one positive, one negative. Then she asked the students to evaluate the reviewer's intelligence.



The verdict was clear: The students thought the negative author was smarter than the positive one – "by a lot," Amabile tells me. Most said the nastier critic was "more competent". Granted, being negative wasn't all upside – they also rated the harsh reviewer as "less warm and more cruel, not as nice," she says. "But definitely smarter." Like my mordant tweets, presumably.

This so-called negativity bias works both ways, it seems. Other studies show that when we seek to impress someone with our massive grey matter, we spout sour and negative opinions. In a follow-up experiment, Bryan Gibson, a psychologist at Central Michigan University, took a group of 117 students (about two-thirds female) and had them watch a short movie and write a review that they would then show to a partner. Gibson's team told some of the reviewers to try to make their partner feel warmly towards them; others were told to try to appear smart. You guessed it: those who were trying to seem brainy went significantly more negative than those trying to be endearing.

Why does this bias exist? No one really knows, though some theorists speculate it's evolutionary. In the ancestral environment, focusing on bad news helped you survive.

Like I said, this is based on anecdata – and you can't easily generalize about why things go viral in the roiling, wine-dark sea of social media. Some utterly saccharine posts get wildly liked; certain smartly critical thoughts are loathed. (Compare the rollicking success of the feel-good site Upworthy to the abuse directed at women and minorities who write intelligent criticism.) And what's "negative"? Is a manifesto for social change negative because it criticizes the status quo or positive because it's idealistic?

But knowing about negativity bias has made me more skeptical of high-brow punditry that defaults to dour views. If caustic wit is what garners a person whooping accolades for their intelligence, surely public intellectuals adjust their approach accordingly.

Gibson told me that his study hadn't been cited or followed up on much by other researchers. "Maybe you weren't negative enough?" I asked. He laughed: "I guess so."

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      - NO
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        - I need to tell someone about my secret foot fetish → WHISPER
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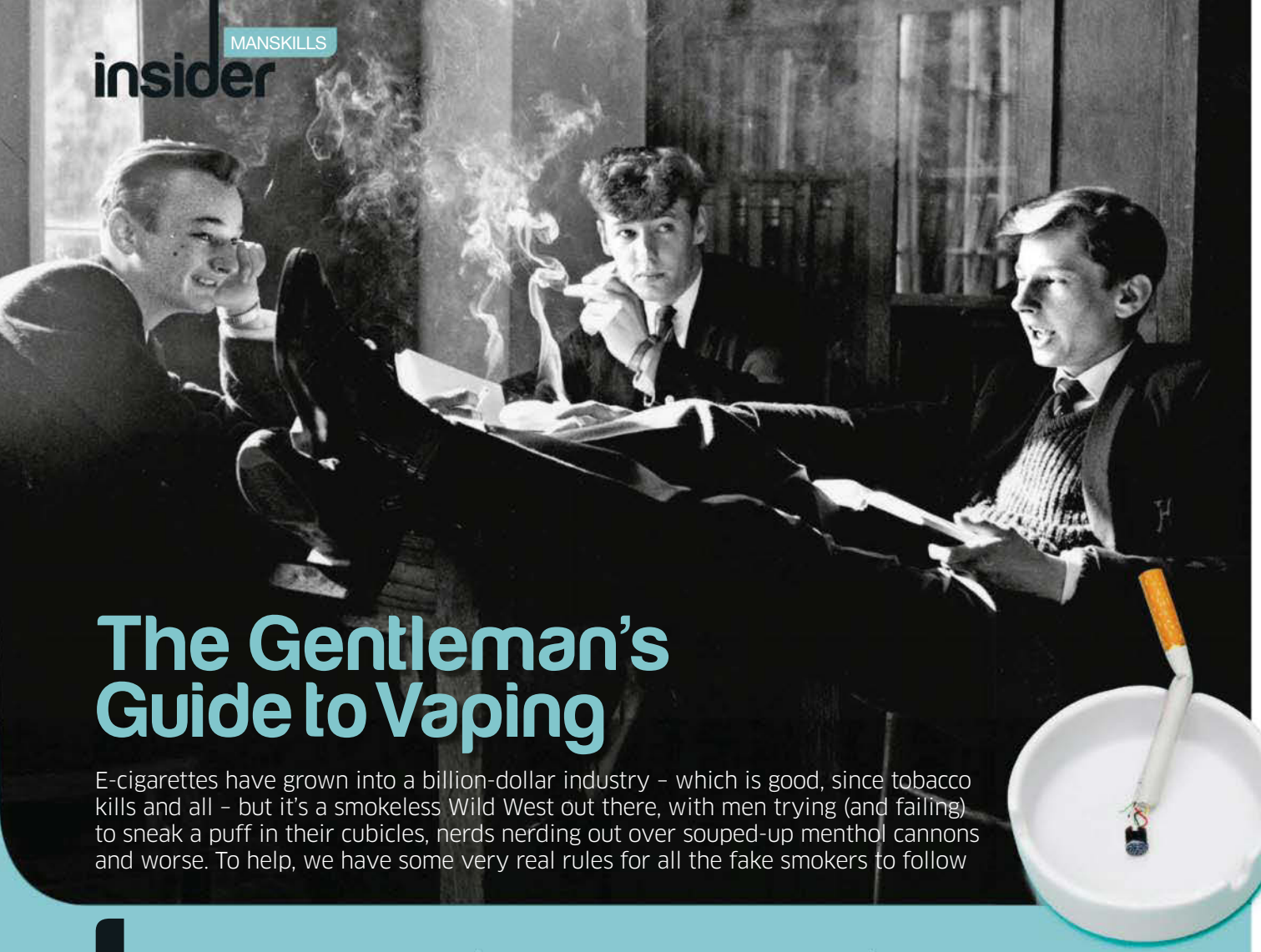
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The Gentleman's Guide to Vaping

E-cigarettes have grown into a billion-dollar industry – which is good, since tobacco kills and all – but it's a smokeless Wild West out there, with men trying (and failing) to sneak a puff in their cubicles, nerds nerding out over souped-up menthol cannons and worse. To help, we have some very real rules for all the fake smokers to follow

If you've inhaled coffin nails for years, you've likely either considered e-cigs or made the switch. Tobacco's nearly 70 murder-y chemicals compel you.

While the jury's out on just how healthy vaping is and if it will get you to quit smoking altogether, at least you're off the hard stuff. Plus, vaping smells markedly less foul, doesn't stain your teeth and nails and never leaves a lingering funk in your Tom Ford suit. And the number of brands and flavours available in the market is on the rise, which makes your usual lights look mundane.

Only, vaping is gross in its own way. It doesn't matter who you are – pursing your lips around a plastic tube that atomizes nicotine-infused propylene glycol into vapour reads as slightly douche. It's always going to be a facsimile, and a vapist will always feel a bit like a poseur.

Pull it together, though.

You've made the right choice to quit the cigs. Now it's time to abide by these non-negotiable rules.

● Don't Dutch-oven everyone else…
Most people agree that vaping at a concert or in the dimly lit corner of a pub in the dead of winter is acceptable. But it's a tenuous social contract at best. Wherever you are, if someone tells you to take it outside, do. Being That Dude who pulls a sneak puff that's as noisy as a stage whisper warrants a punch in the face. This graceless pedantic turd will protest that "it's just water", which is not true at all. Fuck this guy.

● … Especially not at work
We see you, Rohan.

● Do still take a smoke break
Your real-cig buddies will mock you for a few seconds before asking what you think of vaping. Lead them to a better future.

● Don't go vape-punk
Of all vaping species, the steampunk hobbyist who denounces store-bought e-cigs in favour of his own DIY contraptions is the most unfortunate. Don't fall prey. One day you're lurking on the VapePorn subreddit, the next you're considering e-juice presentation stands for your mantle while YouTubing videos on "sub-ohm vaping", which is a real thing you should never, ever know about.

● Do be extra chill if your vape is for public weed
For some (most?), digital smoking isn't about e-cigs – it's a way to get THC easily and surreptitiously. Toting paper, lighters and other fragile paraphernalia is so analog. Since most vape pens require a weed-based oil or wax, anyone with a low threshold for hassle should get a loose-leaf vapourizer. (It's especially ideal for guys on their #dadstruggle – since your wife and you can't roll a jay at home, you can at least enjoy being semi-fucked up while watching *How To Train Your Dragon 8*.) But whatever the legality of marijuana, vaping it requires being cool. It's the "Hamsterdam" of smoking weed in public – the ruse works so long as no one gets too brazen.

● Don't run a vape meth lab
It's okay to brew your own beer, and if you're a grown man, distilling hooch at home is impressive. But it is never acceptable to cook up your own vape juice, butane hash oil or other cannabis concentrates. You are not Heisenberg, regardless of your millinery choices. Buy what you vape. Like a grown-up.

● Don't blow smoke up your own ass
You've made the concession to go faux – great! Don't overcompensate. There's nothing grimmer than a Marlboro man who can't reconcile that a battery-powered tube isn't a real cigarette. Don't lean against the bar wall, cupping your vape pen between thumb and forefinger while scowling. Inhaling like the lead singer of a rock band while a blue LED glows cheerily doesn't make you look badass. But it will keep your lungs from filling with death. So there's that.

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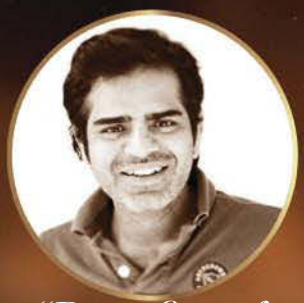
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MANSUR ALI KHAN PATAUDI

Travelling to Pataudi to meet the Nawab a few years ago, I felt the regal touch as soon as I stepped out of the car: liveried staff lined up outside my door and a trusty man Friday greeted me in chaste Urdu with the timeless authority and effusiveness of a king's vassal welcoming a visiting monarch from a neighbouring state. I attempted to get into the spirit of things, strolling up the manicured garden path, from where the dapper Mansur Ali Khan Pataudi, sporting a light navy blue MCC jumper, ushered me to a patio that served as the perfect winter sundeck. In a bid to break the ice, I started talking about cricket's glamour boys from the Sixties, suggesting that it was the likes of him and Abbas Ali Baig who brought sex appeal to Indian cricket. "Sex appeal?" he asked with a dignified chuckle. "No, no – that was ML Jaisimha, with the walk wiggle, the upturned collar and cravat."

His dismissive response highlighted the understated elegance that typified the Nawab's life, both on and off the cricket field. He was named captain at 21, despite having lost one eye in a car accident, yet saw himself more as an elder brother to his teammates, a guardian, especially to those who hadn't travelled overseas. He was instrumental in getting the Indian team to overcome any notions of inferiority they might have had in relation to their white companions.

Pataudi was also a pioneer in building bridges with the film industry, with his marriage to Sixties big-screen bombshell Sharmila Tagore. Until his death, Tiger and Rinku, as they were fondly called, continued to be hailed as "the golden couple", particularly in cricket's glamour capital of the Eighties, Sharjah, where they were often seen at the swish Marbella Club.

At the end of the day, despite his achievements, the lineage and the lifestyle, the most important things one took away from an afternoon spent with Mansur Ali Khan Pataudi were the elegance, the eloquence, the erudition. And the enigma that went with being a nawab. →

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GQ HAWK eye



MS DHONI

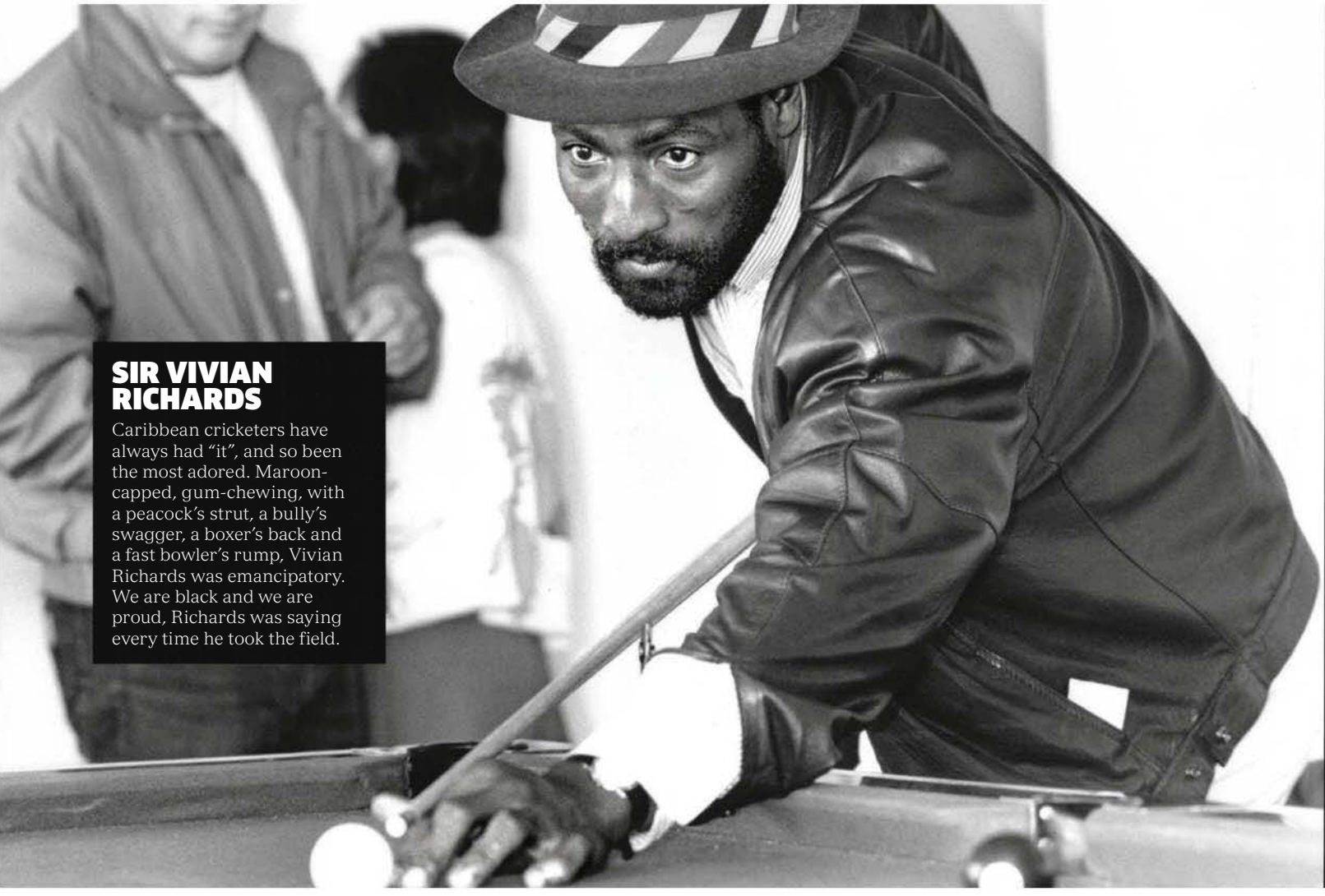
His batting is about the least stylish thing in the game, but Dhoni's is the triumph of body language. Captain Cool. Nerveless while chasing targets. Undemonstrative, no matter if India has just lost by an innings or won the World Cup – excitement is for kids. The erstwhile mane and the bikes and the frequent "style icon" anointments have helped, but above all, it is his on-field persona that Dhoni has nailed. Because, as the modern cricketer knows very well, image is style.

IMRAN KHAN

Before he emerged in the early Seventies, young men on the Subcontinent aspired to be either batsmen or spinners. Then came Imran Khan, bowling at flat-out pace and reverse swinging the ball like a banshee. With that lithe, athletic run-up, the bobbing mane and an action as smooth as Tennessee whiskey, Imran made fast bowling sexy. His rock-solid batting and ferocious captaincy – he drew three series with the fearsome West Indies and led Pakistan to their first Test series win in England, all the while unearthing and nurturing some of cricket's greatest talent – made Imran a legend.

Cultured, dashing and assertive, the Oxford-educated Pathani stallion also enjoyed a jet-setting life across Europe's party spots, especially London, where he was regularly seen at the hottest clubs with the likes of Mick Jagger and Jerry Hall. All men wanted to be him. Women wanted to bed him. And when it came to his most beautiful suitors, he sometimes obliged.





SIR VIVIAN RICHARDS

Caribbean cricketers have always had "it", and so been the most adored. Maroon-capped, gum-chewing, with a peacock's strut, a bully's swagger, a boxer's back and a fast bowler's rump, Vivian Richards was emancipatory. We are black and we are proud, Richards was saying every time he took the field.

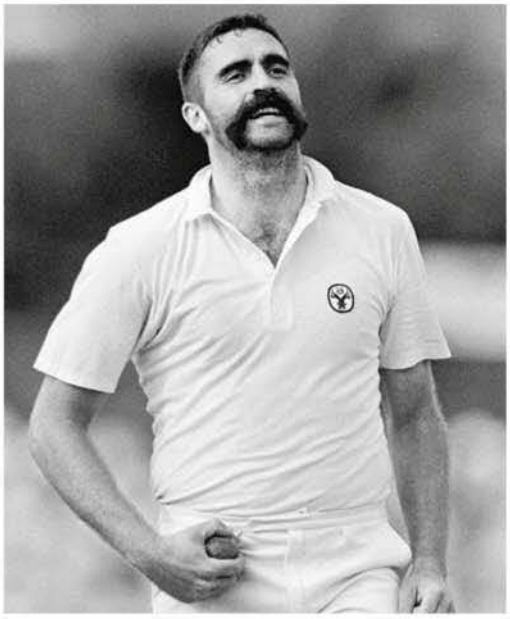


BRIAN LARA

Lara was, without a doubt, one of cricket's last great artists. The pitch was his canvas, the bat his brush. He thought big and played imperiously. He batted with ferocity and great subtlety at the same time, making quick, decisive strokes like a fast-flowing stream. Who can forget that exaggerated back lift, the aerial pirouette pull shot, the sashay down the track to spin or the ferocity of the cut through a packed off-side cordon? That was artistry. That was Lara.

With his magical wrists and intuition for the gaps, Lara sculpted masterpieces: 277, 221, 375, 213, 400*, 153* were just a few of his classic works. He favoured Test cricket, because it allowed him to display his talent and appetite for everything big. Not for him the flashy 40 of 50 or 60; no, Lara liked to get in and bat for a day or two. Nobody made the game look better, and few played it better.





MERV HUGHES

You can look all you want, but you won't find a more entertaining cricketer than Hughes. If opponents weren't already intimidated by his size, the Australian was also the king of sledging – whether he was starting his run-up from 45 yards or taunting Hansie Cronje even while getting smashed by the South African batsman all around the park. When he wasn't practising those dark arts, "Fruit Fly" (a reference to Australia's national pest) would be fielding at the boundary, flirting with the ladies, showing spectators how to stretch like a cricketer and participating in Mexican waves. He was the ultimate moustachioed badass of the sport. When was the last time you saw a bowler tell Sir Vivian Richards to "fuck off", right after taking his wicket?

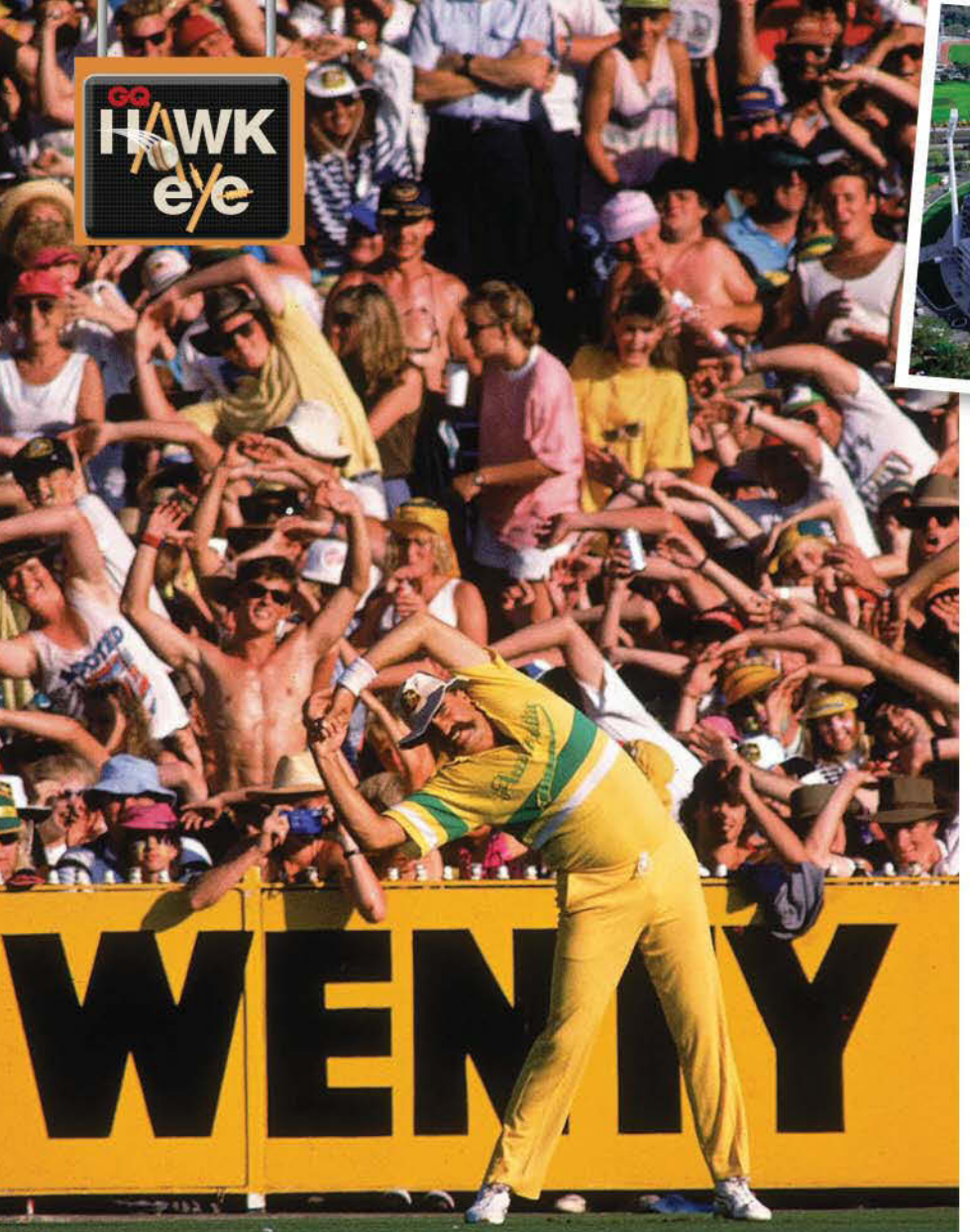


RAHUL DRAVID

Dravid once said he'd never be able to write an autobiography like Andre Agassi's *Open*, a dramatic account of a chequered career, because he'd lived a singularly uninteresting life: no drugs, no tumultuous love life – he even enjoyed training. But he was being modest. His story, when he writes it, will be no less compelling. There were batsmen who hit the ball more effortlessly, but Dravid's was a triumph of mind and will. Though he prepared, and played, like his life depended on it, he still found the time to have a life outside the game. He is that rare elite athlete: equally at ease in the rarefied arena of international cricket as in the real world. And that's real cool.

WORDS: RAHUL BHATTACHARYA (DHONI, RICHARDS), SAMBIT BAL (DRAVID), JAMIE ALTER (LARA, KHAN), MERYL D'SOUZA (HUGHES).
IMAGE: GETTY IMAGES (DHONI, KHAN, HUGHES, DRAVID), REX FEATURES (RICHARDS, LARA)

GQ HAWK eye





The Ghosts of MCG's PAST

When the **Melbourne Cricket Ground** hosts the World Cup final this month, there'll be echoes of the infamous incident that gave the Chappell brothers a place in history



Australia have always toyed with fair play and unsportsmanlike conduct. Their most scandalous incident was against New Zealand at the Benson & Hedges World Series Cup in 1981. With the five-match series tied at 1-1, both teams were looking for a win. Batting first, the Aussies put up a respectable 235/4. By the last ball of New Zealand's innings, the Kiwis needed six runs, with their number-10 batsman, Brian McKechnie, at the crease.

For all intents and purposes the match was in the bag for Australia. It would have taken something extraordinarily special for McKechnie to clear the fence, and even if he did, the match would have only been drawn. However, not wanting to take any risks, then-Australian captain Greg Chappell walked over to his younger brother Trevor and ordered him to do something that would forever haunt the sport.

Trevor took a short run-up – you'd have thought he was taking a penalty in football. Hell, even those guys take longer run-ups. As he reached the crease, he bowled an underarm delivery that had the ball rolling along the pitch like a bowling ball. In a fit of rage, McKechnie tapped the ball back along the pitch and flung his bat away. The MCG faithful booed their players off the field. Until then, underarm bowling was not against cricketing laws. But as a direct result, it was soon after banned in limited-overs cricket.

If New Zealand was ever to wage war on its neighbours, that moment would have been it. Forget that former Aussie players like Keith Miller criticized Greg's cowardice by saying, "Yesterday One Day cricket died, and Greg Chappell should be buried with it". Even the Chappells' elder brother, Ian, was horrified at what had transpired: "Fair dinkum, Greg. How much pride do you sacrifice to win $35,000".

It's not just athletes who're shrouded in the blanket of highly volatile behaviour at the MCG: The fans are just as unpredictable – especially those in the Bay 13 section of the Great Southern Stand. At that little stretch you'll find hooligans who can go from hilariously mimicking warm-up routines of the fielders in front of them to hurling cups of urine onto the field. In essence, Bay 13 is the most literal expression of the Australian way: Notorious, unabashed and unrestrained.

We're unlikely to see an underarm incident at this year's Final, but that's not to say we'll be robbed of drama at "The G". The last time this Australian Colosseum hosted a World Cup Final, in 1992, Wasim Akram cemented his place as a Pakistani legend when he took two English wickets in two balls and guided his team to their first-ever World Cup. At the MCG, just as in cricket, there's never a shortage of excitement.

WORDS: MERYL D'SOUZA; IMAGE: GETTY IMAGES (MERY), MELBOURNE CRICKET GROUND (STADIUM)



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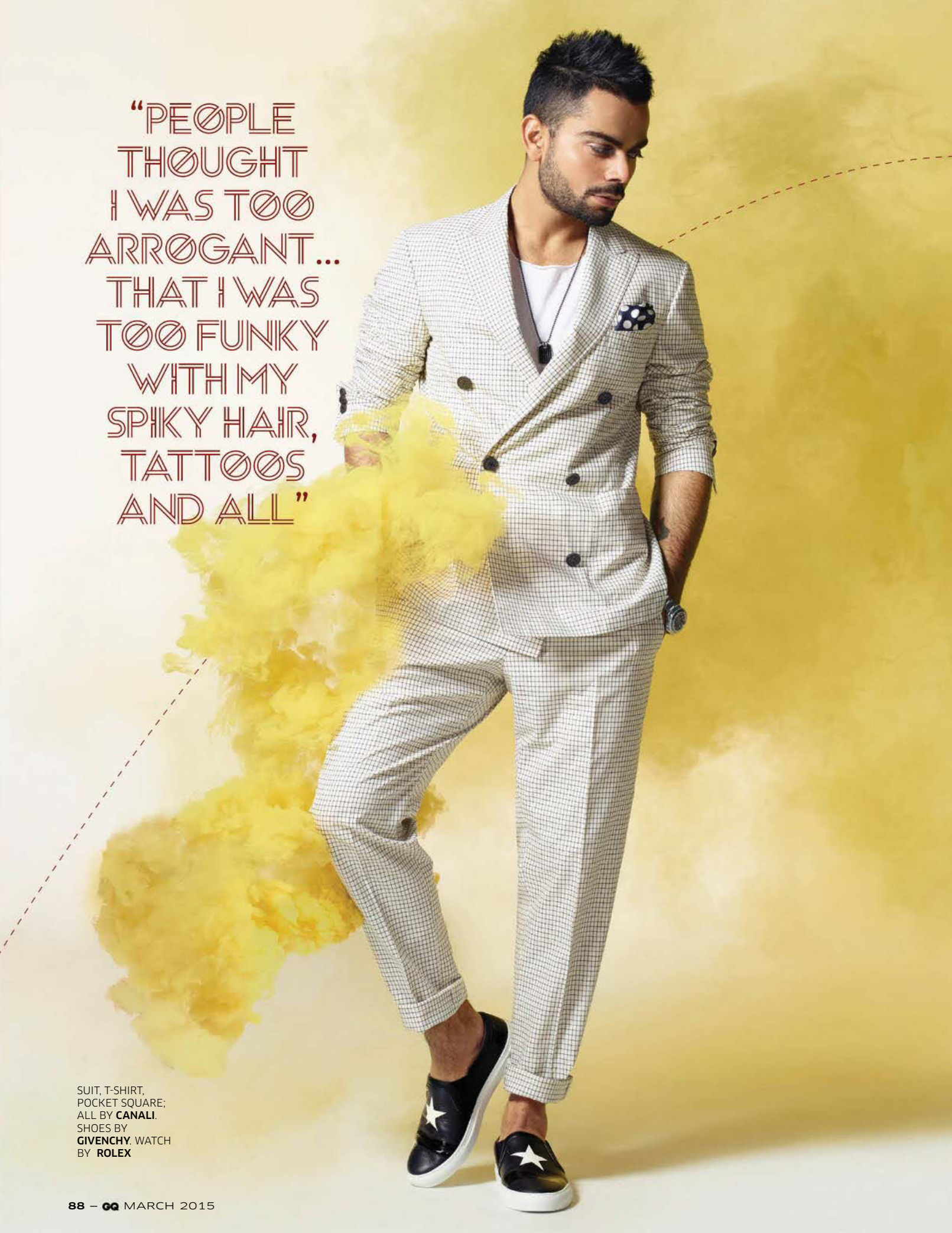
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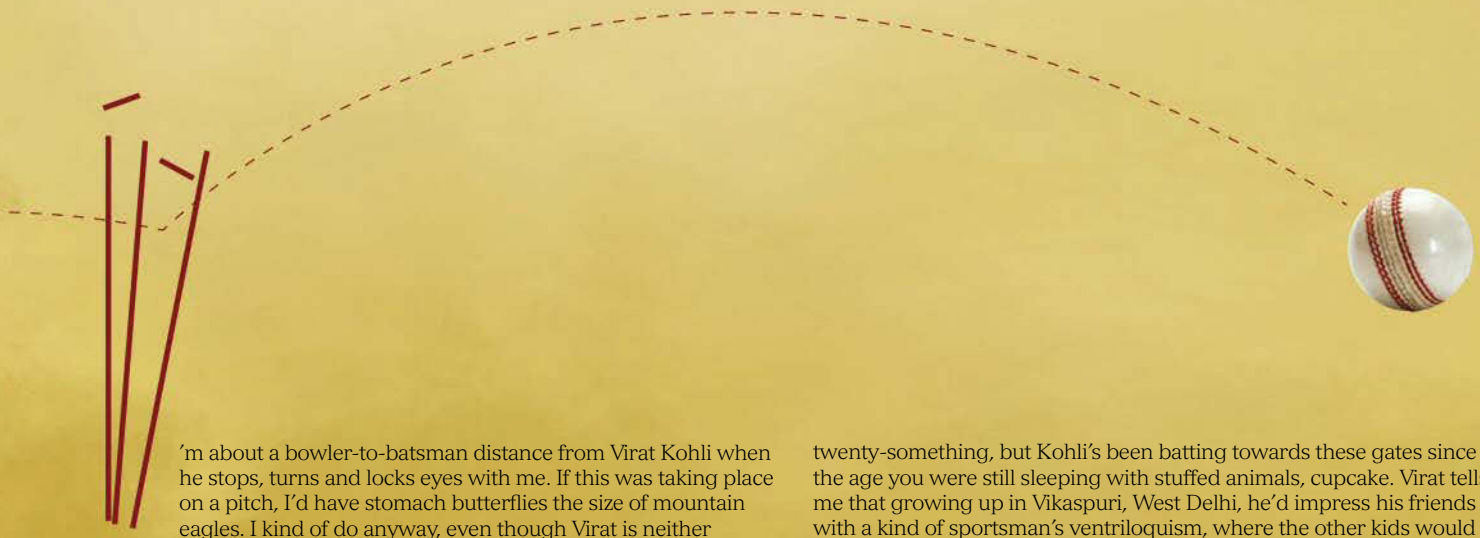
THE ICONOGRAPHY OF VIRAT KOHLI

Used to be if you were a cricket star, you were known for cricket. But even as he continues to break records on the pitch, athlete/clotheshorse/sports club owner Virat Kohli is laying the turf for a new kind of super-celebrity – and if there is another way to enhance his image, you can bet he's going to find it

WRITTEN BY **DAVE BESSELING** STYLED BY **VIJENDRA BHARDWAJ**
PHOTOGRAPHED BY **CHARUDUTT CHITRAK**



SUIT, T-SHIRT, POCKET SQUARE; ALL BY **CANALI**. SHOES BY **GIVENCHY**. WATCH BY **ROLEX**



I'm about a bowler-to-batsman distance from Virat Kohli when he stops, turns and locks eyes with me. If this was taking place on a pitch, I'd have stomach butterflies the size of mountain eagles. I kind of do anyway, even though Virat is neither dressed in India blue nor taking guard, and I'm loafing by a rack of designer clothes in a hoary warehouse studio in Gurgaon.

Because beyond the *Thundercats* haircut and the *Faith*-era George Michael beard – affectations contributing to Kohli being *SportsPro*'s second-most marketable athlete in the world – the figure striding towards me might be the biggest celebrity I've interviewed in a year and a half of celebrity interviews for *GQ*. With a new record broken seemingly every at-bat and becoming Test captain at age 26, Kohli has already begun to shoulder, Atlas-like, the weight of Indian cricket.

Before leading his retinue on towards the dressing room, our cover star shakes my hand and says, almost whispers, "Virat."

It's an introduction conceded to a special few, the Bonos, the Beyoncés, those for whom a first name is all that's necessary to imply the scale of everything else. Virat is now one of those.

He's also taller than I expected. And fitter (that's a pretty tight V-neck tee there, champ). Ten years ago, a cricket star may have sauntered in here with a paunch, dressed in sweats and deference. Not Virat and this new bunch. Kohli is vanning cricket's guard of celebrity sportspeople, where there's not just the storied glory of T20 to shoot for but the lucrative, TV-friendly shorthand of the Indian Premier League. And all those endorsement shoots to scrub up for, commitments that require medicine-ball workouts, personal-trainer calorie counts, waxed arms and chests, Vanilla Ice notches shaved into eyebrows. Virat's into all of it, and he doesn't much care if you like it or not.

As in the YouTube video of Virat proclaiming his stylist the only other person allowed to touch his hair, this kind of persona in a placid sporting culture can contribute to him coming off as precious, a popinjay, an arrogant douche-tube; but unlike the Bollywood actors so fond of telling me how appreciated they are, in sports there are records, scorecards and stats, and Virat's got respective Test and ODI batting averages of 46.30 and 52.61 to speak for him.

Such numbers beget other kinds of numbers. These days only the first names Shah Rukh and Salman tab higher on India's celebrity balance sheets. A big part of Virat edging into that rarefied bracket is his relationship with Adidas – whose reps are just over there, in the studio's corner, unloading several shoeboxes' worth of custom trainers – plus a host of other brands and products that, at an estimated 10 crore rupees a year, have put Virat's earnings ahead of his hero Sachin Tendulkar and his teammate MS Dhoni. As his representatives remind me, constantly, "Virat is a national icon."

"Some of [the endorsements offered] are off the hook, man, you can't even imagine," says Virat, in his dressing room after shooting two wardrobe changes on two sets as quick as his 52-ball century. He periodically breaks the fourth wall, walking out of frame to check his angles on the photographer's monitors, his regimen of head tilts, half-grins and brow-arches as practised as his swing.

"Some of the stuff I did initially, I wouldn't do now," he explains, "lying around with girls in my underwear and stuff… That was just experimenting, getting a feel for how it works… I'd rather do my own line."

"H&M David Beckham style."

"Exactly."

Last November, he went one further, launching his own menswear line, Wrogn – spelled wrogn on porpoise.

You'd think it all a lot to handle for this sprite-faced twenty-something, but Kohli's been batting towards these gates since the age you were still sleeping with stuffed animals, cupcake. Virat tells me that growing up in Vikaspuri, West Delhi, he'd impress his friends with a kind of sportsman's ventriloquism, where the other kids would call out a batsman's name and Virat would proceed to rack up points in their particular style. Not even ten years old and a minor guru of several batting *gharanas*.

"Yeah, I was pretty good," Virat sums up, as matter-of-factly as you'd recite your shoe size. And it was all up from there: screaming through the Delhi Ranji team, 18 years at the West Delhi Academy to a national-side batsman. That was the prenaissance, then in 2011, he was dropped from the squad just before the Test series against England.

"I was left out because of my attitude," he says. "People thought I was too arrogant… that I was too funky with my spiky hair, tattoos and all." He describes himself back then with the mix of remorse and nostalgia an ex-gambler would allot Las Vegas. "Training with the best players in the world every day, you start feeling a bit overconfident, you start feeling cocky, and that happened to me in the first year of the IPL."

All that was only three years ago, but time moves faster for Virat Kohli, and leaning back in his chair, hands hanging off the ends of the arms, his voice strays into uncleji territory. "The IPL has given a lot of youngsters the opportunity to gain confidence, but some get overconfident and they lose the dream to play Test cricket for the nation," the level Virat sees as the highest form of the game. "It's all about how early you realize that and get back on track," he says, straightening his index finger, emphasizing didactically, "those years, when you're 19, 20, 21 – they don't come back."

Standing beside the photographer's monitor during shots, it takes a while to resolve this Cabbage Patch leprechaun with a world-class athlete. This kid has had to grow up far faster than his appearance can show. With increasing responsibility as both India's World Cup hope and captain of the IPL's Royal Challengers Bangalore, Virat explains how, being so incessantly in the public eye, he's developed a few new senses over the years, like knowing the precise moment when someone's trying to sneak a picture of him.

"I don't even have to see them holding their phones at odd angles," he smiles, "I just know when people are taking pictures of me."

"Kind of like when a journalist can sense a hovering PR while interviewing a national icon," I say.

Virat snickers, the presence behind my right shoulder disperses and the PR opens the dressing room door and takes command of our star's lunch: a piece of tilapia with a side of steamed vegetables. As the hoverer serves him, Virat motions to the take-away dish, "Would you like some?", but I decline, I've just tanked up from the pot of rajma out behind the studio. National icons are allowed their special food requests at these things. Thankfully, the fawning PR doesn't offer to squeeze Virat's lemon.

Citrusing his own fish, Virat's Terminator-cold tone turns from his cricketing record to the numbers of the future. "I think I'll play for another 12 years," he calculates, "that's my target," but "I'll probably go mad when I leave cricket, so I need a business venture, start setting up for 10-15 years down the line."

Which so far has meant buying a seat at the owner's table of the Indian Super League's FC Goa, where cheering from the stands during the club's opening season must have been a relief compared ●●●

to India's overseas cricket tours leading up to Australia 2015. Losing the world No 1 spot and with several players performing well below form, this World Cup Down Under has Indian fingers tapping, waiting to be pointed at wunderkind Virat Kohli, who admits his last England tour was the lowest point of his career.

"The three or four years [leading up to 2014] had all been going up the graph," he says, "then in England I didn't have such a good time… You don't learn about yourself during the good times in life," but "I didn't expect [the bad times] to go on for that long."

There was a particular piece of voodoo going around last year about what was really throwing Virat off stride, Anushka Sharma, his obvious but unconfirmed special lady friend, whose presence in England was seen by diehards as enough to pox the entire team. Neither of them made any statements, but neither did Virat dither when blowing Anushka a kiss across his bat, having just cracked the fastest-ever 6,000 runs in ODI cricket in Hyderabad last November.

It's not that I give a shit either way, it's the fact that having had the strange fortune to meet both Virat and Anushka in the same week, I have to give it to the (alleged) couple, they put up a united front. Not united in denial or deflection, but united in not giving a fraction of the fuck you think they should.

"It's really personal," insists Virat, his voice still as flatline as his lunch, "and what I feel about a certain person or whoever I'm with, you know, I don't need to go out and display that in public."

The contradiction between this statement and photos of them strolling hand-in-hand down a street in New Zealand is admittedly frustrating as an interlocutor, but also somehow appropriate, part of a self-mythology marketing package. It's the way Jimmy Page can get away with saying nothing about how many TVs or teenagers he smashed in the Seventies, or that apocryphal insterting of a sea creature into a groupie's vagina. He was in the biggest band in the world and that's all the explanation he's ever needed. He's Jimmy Page, bitch.

"There's my profession, my sport, whatever I'm doing as a celebrity," says Virat, showing the first signs of anxiety, which in turn makes the hovering PR start walking in place a bit, "but then when I want my time off, people still want to give me all the stress in the world. I find that really [pause] I wouldn't say disturbing…"

"I might," I offer.

He shoots me a glare, a bit like Ben Stiller's duckface in *Zoolander*, and snaps "That's because it hasn't happened to you," before going back to toying with his tilapia, finding his next sentence somewhere in the flesh of the white fish. "None of that has anything to do with what I do on the field. I might be as committed as probably the best ten players that this country has ever produced, but just because I have a lifestyle people might not like…" Another steely look, but not quite Blue Steel, as he leans forward. "I don't feel I'm liable to answer anything about myself, my personal life or my sport to anyone. If I find sense in something that's been asked of me, I would obviously give the right answer, but if I choose not to then that shouldn't become an issue. You ask a question, you get an answer, you should be happy with it."

AND THEN BEFORE HEADING OUT TO POSE FOR THE NEXT SHOT, VIRAT KOHLI SLIPS ME A NOTE

Before the PR can hover halfway into my ear canal, the dressing room door is swung open – *they're ready for your close-up, Mr Kohli* – and there's the kind of shuffling that happens when someone like Virat Kohli is going to walk from one place to another. Before he gets up though, he takes my pen and paper and starts writing, during which time there's the held-breath silence that happens when Virat Kohli does something unscheduled. And then, before heading out to pose for the next shot, leaving behind his interviewer, his fish and his PR – who reminds me, past tense this time, that I've just interviewed a national icon – Virat Kohli slips me a note.

It's a request for a correction on something he said several paragraphs of transcript ago, written in a loopy, high-school kind of cursive with little circles, not quite hearts but close, above the uncapitalized i's:

in the personal life question
instead of writing "whoever i am with"
please write "the person i am with"

For someone claiming not to care what's written about him, such specificity regarding subject/verb agreement is unexpected, but his grammar niggling is as close as I'm going to get to being the first reporter with a straight answer on the girlfriend subject. Maybe for someone under such consistent scrutiny, someone worth so much money to everyone working for him, the bravado is a coping mechanism, and this strange little note is as honest and open as the golden goose can be today.

The last shot of the day is set up outside the studio, and it doesn't take long for the staff at a building across the lane to peer upon the shape of our spiky-haired subject and make the mental leap from Sonic the Hedgehog to Virat Kohli. Five people turns to ten, and soon our crew has to erect a temporary backdrop to shield the set from the couple dozen onlookers lined up along the other building's roof.

Once we wrap, the black sheet is taken down and the back door of a white Range Rover waits open. Virat's goodbye is even quicker than his one-word hello, because there isn't one, but before he gets into the car, he takes a minute to wave to the horde. By their response you'd think he just hit a six.

The door is closed, the SUV speeds away, and all those gathered in that late-afternoon heat, more than satisfied to've seen their national icon simply walk from one place to another, are still screaming one word. It's all that's necessary to know the scale of everything else: "*Viraaaaaaaaaaat!*"



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GQ Style

EDITED BY **VIJENDRA BHARDWAJ**
& SHIVANGI LOLAYEKAR



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SPIN THE WHEEL

Pharrell's mega collection for adidas Originals is here. And in colours so bright, summer's never looked this happy. Which one are you?

Amar Daved

The British fashion photographer could outdo his models on the style front

Describe your style.
Classic, neutral, relaxed.

Which are your favourite brands?
I love APC, Kenzo and Grenson. Jigsaw does amazing suits, while Reiss does great basics.

Where do you shop?
Depends on what I need. Living in London, I have access to an amazing mix of brands. If I want to grab a bargain, I go to Brick Lane. For luxury labels, though, I shop online at Mr Porter.

How has menswear evolved in the UK?
I like that classic tailoring hasn't died. New brands will come and go, but nothing will ever outdo classic British tailoring.

What's the best part about your job?
I've worked with some amazing people in my 10 years in the industry. I love to see new faces progress into something big.

Who are your favourite photographers?
Alasdair McLellan and Peter Lindbergh.

Three things every man should have in his wardrobe?
A good pair of jeans, brogues and a well-fitted suit.

What was your first and last big buy?
My first was an Yves Saint Laurent jumper and my last was a Marc Jacobs backpack.

How do you kick back?
I play a lot of sports, which keeps me active, and I DJ. Otherwise I like to relax with a movie and my dog Hugo.

What are you wearing?
SUIT BY **JIGSAW**
TURTLENECK BY **REISS**
SHOES BY **GRENSON**

INTERVIEW: SHIVANGI LOLAYEKAR; PHOTO: AMAR DAVED



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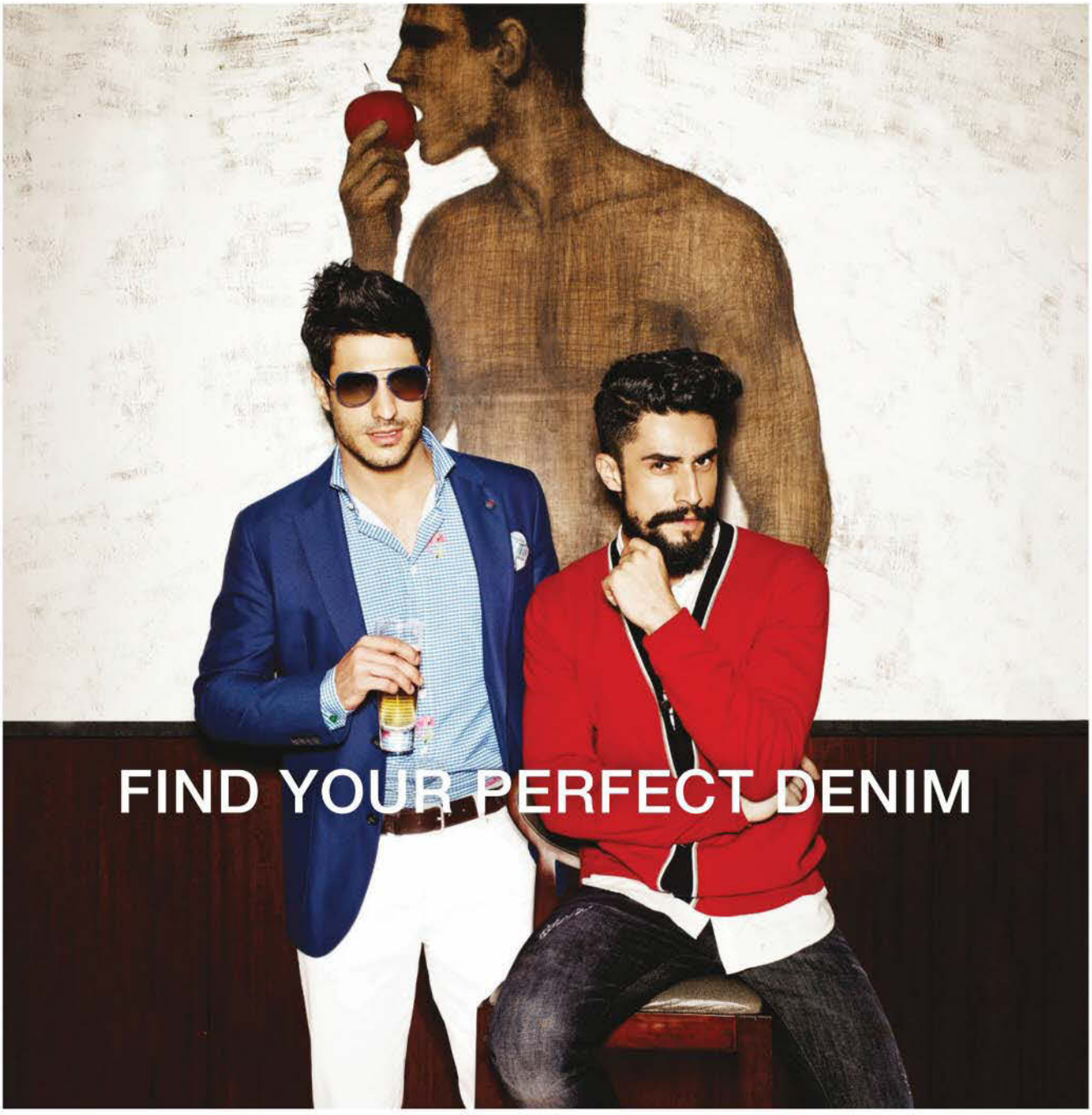
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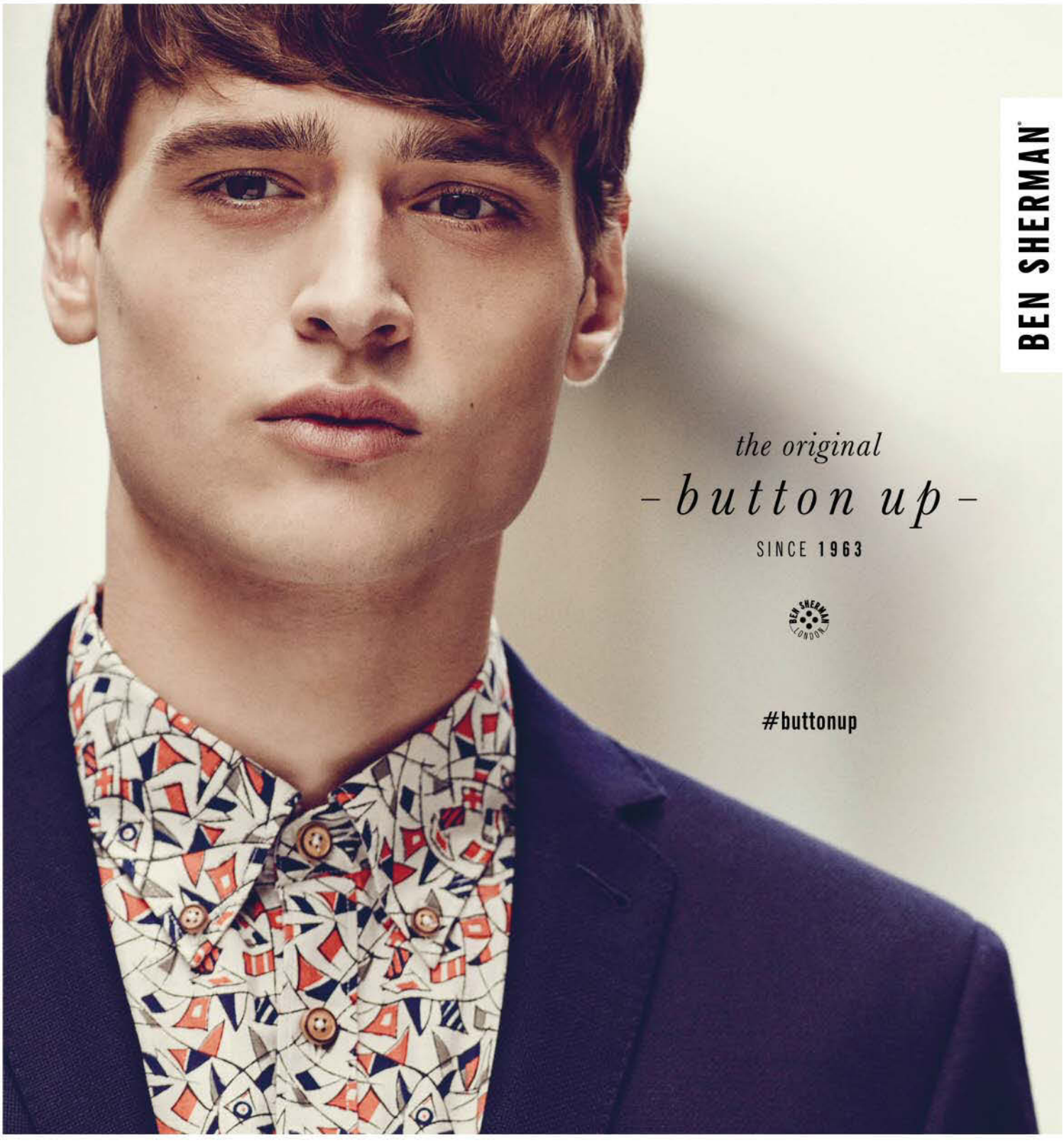
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The List

TOP PICKS FROM GQ'S STYLE DESK

1 HEY JEAN

Denim is summer's biggest hit. And while global designers are pushing boundaries with the fabric, **Rajesh Pratap Singh**'s raised the bar at home with a patchwork jacket and pajama jeans. Perfect to cruise in - whether you're in Delhi or Dallas.
rajeshpratapsingh.com





2 HOT RIGHT NOW

WHAT: Gucci's sumptuous leather bracelet.
WHY: Its bohemian vibe will complement your linen suit as well as a graphic T-shirt.
gucci.com

3. EYE ON THE PRIZE

The great thing about aviators is that they suit almost everyone – whether you're David Beckham or David from Bandra. Opt for a slick pair like these **Versace** ones, because although they're steeper than street versions, putting them on every morning will be so much sweeter.
versace.com; luxottica.com



4 UP TOP

If you've been reading *GQ*, you'll know that trainers are all over our style pages at the moment. And chances are you've even gone ahead and snagged a few pairs. Now we're telling you to switch it up and move from classic Stan Smiths to these **Adidas** high-tops. Why? Because they're in sync with this season's safari trend. And, you don't really want to wear the same pair everyday. **adidas.com**



5 BLOOMING TALES

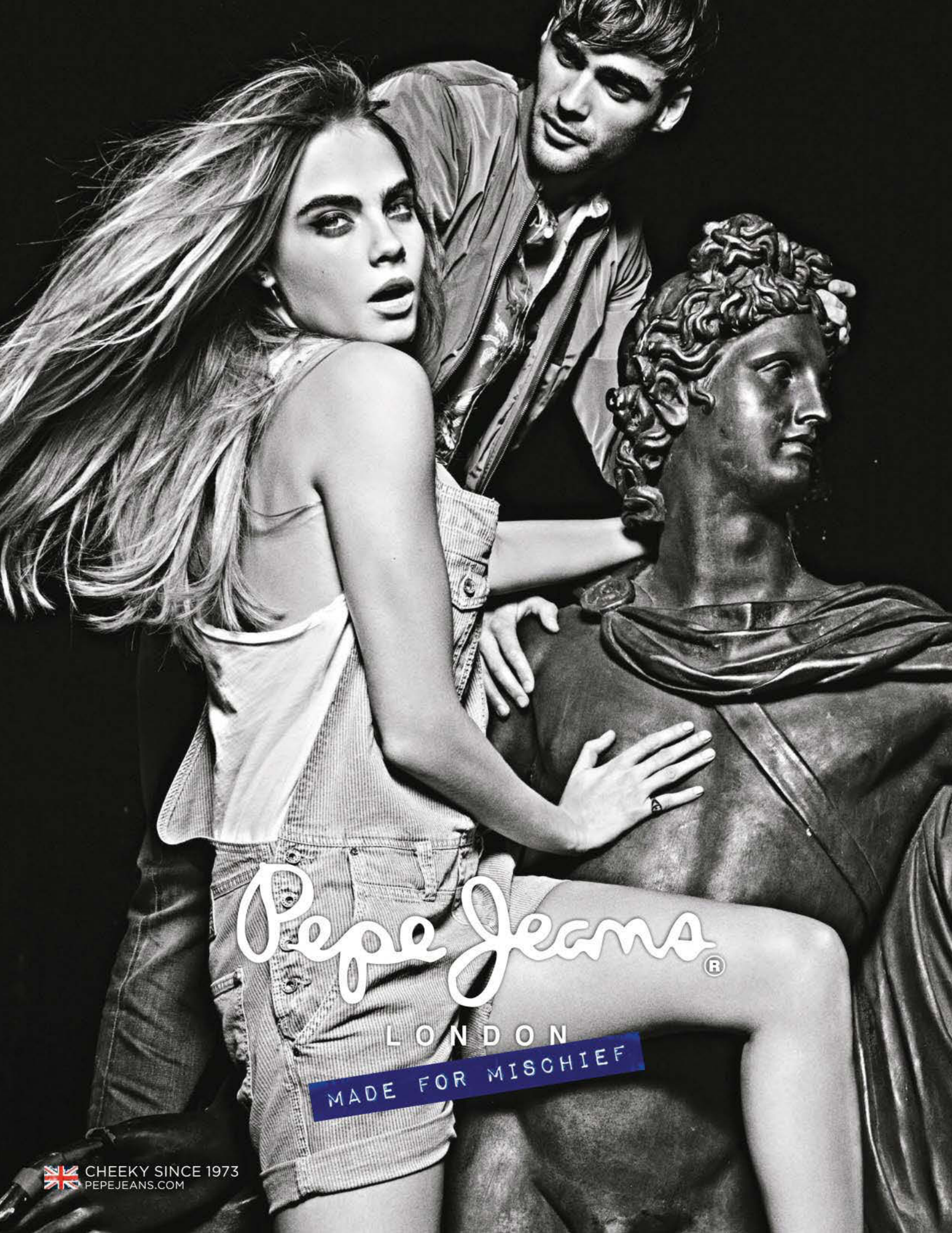
Designer **Ashish Soni** knows a thing or two about dressing up and is a pro at making his patrons follow suit – this time, in a floral evening jacket.
***GQ* Tip:** Ditch the dress trousers and do the white shirt-blue jeans routine for a look that's distinctive yet familiar.
perniaspopupshop.com



6 REVVING UP

There are only two 1938 Bugatti 57SC coupes in existence, and **Ralph Lauren** owns one of them. It's also his inspiration for the Automotive Chronograph – a quick glance at the matte black dial, the elm burl disc on it and the tachymeter scale will remind you of the dream machine. And the watch's got an equally fine engine under that face: an automatic movement developed by Jaeger-LeCoultre. **ralphlauren.com**

WORDS: SHIVANGI LOLAYEKAR, VARUN GODINHO; PHOTO: TARUN VISHWA (ASHISH SONI); MODEL: UPKAR MULWANI (ASHISH SONI)


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AMICI DI PERONI

The conversation didn't run dry, nor did the night. Italian fine dining paired with Peroni Nastro Azzurro, a great affair indeed – la dolce vita!

When it comes to style and the arts, food and drinks and in particular beer, there are very few who can do it better than the Italians. Naturally, Mumbai welcomed Peroni Nastro Azzurro with open arms as the Italian super-premium beer brand hosted one of its most coveted events – Amici di Peroni or "Friends of Peroni" with event partner Kaveer Shahani from Groove Temple – in the city.





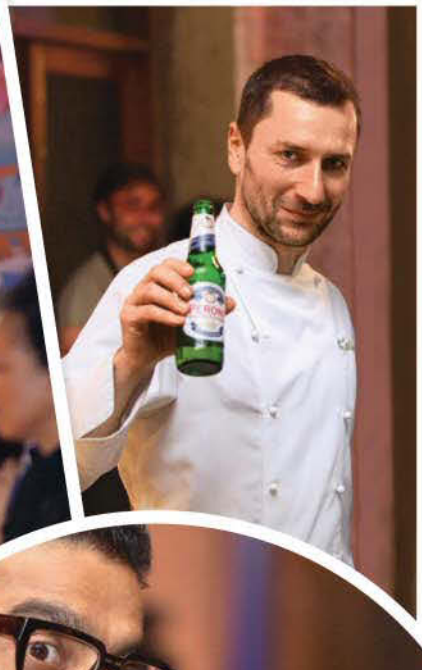
A secret dinner party where beer showcased the spirit of Italian tradition was meticulous. What was so unique about the evening besides the stunning venue and delectable food? It was the very premise of Peroni's campaign. Pairing influencers from different specialities to connect with each other, socialise and become friends over a few glasses of Peroni,of course.

Imagine finding yourself seated next to someone you've met for the very first time. Daunting at first, maybe. Exhilarating by the end, for sure. Every guest, chef and designer, foodie and fashionista agreed to this, and it wasn't just the Peroni talking. Magazine publishers mingled with consulate highrollers, TV personalities clinked their stylish Peroni glasses with branding moguls. The intimate affair counted 25 well-known individuals including Kabir Bedi, Ektaa Aggarwal, Camille Richardson, Shireen Faroque and Italian Consul General Ugo Ciarlatani among those at the table.













The house of Peroni gave the magnificent Great Eastern Mills of Mumbai a complete makeover and the curated sense of Italian chic was most definitely on display – from the old-world charm of the venue to the Italian-style elegant dining table and authentic open-air cooking. The former mill, now a lofty furniture store, was converted into a beautiful dining room with one long custom-made table put together by well-known décor stylist Shaan Shahani. And the food! Acclaimed Italian chef Alessandro Cargiolli of Artusi Restaurant in New Delhi, celebrated for running kitchens all across the globe, curated an exceptional Italian three-course meal. Guests got to pick and choose from modern Italian delights like a mildly spiced Calamari fritti, Ravioli con asparagi and Tagliatelle alla Bolognese, among other dishes that were both pleasing to the palette and eye, and which blended beautifully with the crisp, unique taste of Peroni Nastro Azzurro.

The toasts of the night went a bit like this: to many more nights like these, new friendships, great food and Peroni… goodnight and Grazie mille!



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GQ WATCH

EDITED BY VARUN GODINHO

- Did Apple just design the world's most intelligent timepiece?
- Fashion brands that are stepping up their horological game



WHO'S THE SMARTEST OF 'EM ALL?

The only disappointment about the new iWatch is its name. (It's simply the Apple Watch – guys, come on!) In fact, **Apple**'s created something we actually want on our wrists, and realized that form comes before function. Happily, its functions are A-grade too. **Stuart McGurk** picks the most exciting features

PHOTO: MITCH PAYNE



DIGITALLY CROWNED

Naturally, when dealing with a watch-sized screen – it comes in both 1.5- and 1.65-inch versions – it was never going to be practical to scroll by swiping with your fat fingers. But – as Apple did with the iPod clickwheel – the solution is a thing of innovative elegance. A "digital crown" on the watch's side lets you easily pinch and zoom the display without your digits getting in the way, and also works as a push button to return to the home screen.

The clincher: The digital crown and the "Select" button are the only physical controls, keeping the look sleek and minimal.

THE STRAPS ARE LIMITLESS

The three standard strap varieties the Apple Watch comes with – luxury leather, bright fluoroelastomer or engineered stainless steel, with 34 different combinations in total – are only the beginning. Expect everyone from Hugo Boss to Emporio Armani to also get in on the act.

The clincher: Unlike regular watches, the straps are easy to swap out, meaning this timepiece can go from gym kit to evening wear in a matter of seconds.

A FITNESS TRACKER

See those four little glass eyes on the back? Together they make up the Apple Watch's fitness tech, including an accelerometer and heart-rate monitor, which can also track the distance travelled on any given day when paired with an iPhone. But it's the built-in Activity and Workout apps that will really make the most of it, from telling you the number of calories you've burned to setting specific targets at everything from running to cycling.

The clincher: Just wait until third-party developers start creating software for it – Apple's default apps are only the start.





PHOTO: MITCH PAYNE

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UB CITY MALL, BANGALORE



GOLD STANDARD

Unlike its rivals, Apple realized a watch is first and foremost a luxury item, so its high-end 18k gold edition is a genuine breakthrough: a crossover between high-tech and designer luxury. Termed the "Edition" collection, there are six varieties to choose from, each with a different strap. Even the display – polished sapphire crystal – is a thing of true beauty.

The clincher: The gold is twice as hard as standard gold, meaning it should remain looking as new as the day you bought it.

YOUR NEW eWALLET

If there's one killer app on the Apple Watch, this is it. With Apple Pay, the Cupertino giant might well prove to be the harbinger of doom for the humble wallet. Sync with your credit or debit cards and paying for goods will involve nothing more than a click of the side button. It'll even store all your loyalty cards, meaning you'll never pay more than you should.

The clincher: Your bank details are never shared with the merchants – instead, each instance of payment creates a unique account number for your purchase, making fraud almost impossible.

PHOTO: MITCH PAYNE

SUMMER'S ESSENTIAL FORMALS

From monochrome masterworks to summer's favourite linen separates, Arrow gives you a low-down on the trends that matter this season



When temperatures soar, nothing beats the cool comfort of **Linen,** especially when it comes to a suit or Indian formals. Arrow's Spring/Summer 2015 collection brings you a stunning range of season-appropriate bandhis, blazers, trousers and dress shirts in cool pastel shades to dramatically enhance your summery style.

GQ TIP: Add an element of fun with linen bow ties in unique prints.

Think Don Draper. Think power-dressing. The **New York** range by Arrow's Spring/Summer 2015 collection features clean lines, slim cuts, tailored fits and an inspired "salt and pepper" theme. Look out for the chic mandarin collars in men's shirts and quirky prints designed to make you look and feel sharp at work and beyond. Monochrome never looked so sexy.

YOUR MUST-HAVE FIELD GUIDE TO DRESSING WELL THIS SUMMER

ARROW
USA·1851

Time for fashion

We clock the latest pieces from all the leading labels

Timepieces produced by high-end fashion houses run the gamut from obligatory to outstanding, with wildly varied price tags. Some – like Bvlgari, which has consolidated two small brands (Gérald Genta and Daniel Roth) into its own – are serious about carving a niche and earning respect. Others are more concerned with following watchmaking trends, while most focus on extending their brand in an authentic way. Here's what to expect from the best of the fashion pack.





GUCCI

EXPECT: CLASSIC, WITH THE ODD RETRO TOUCH

Gucci isn't risking its classic brand cachet with its latest suite of conservative, attractive pieces.

Gucci Timeless Slim Automatic

LOUIS VUITTON

EXPECT: CONTINUITY

The fit between travel goods and time is strong, and LV's commitment to the very best of both – in terms of expertise, materials, ingenuity – is unwavering.

Louis Vuitton Escale Worldtime



BURBERRY

EXPECT: BRITISH PRIDE

Burberry is on to a winner with this iconic model, which has iterated through mechanical, quartz and limited editions, and shows no sign of losing its bold, unisex appeal.

Burberry The Britain BBY1601 43mm Automatic



HERMÈS

EXPECT: PLAYFULNESS

There's a lighthearted whimsy with the Hermès watches that captures the spirit of the brand, especially when combined with the origin of the materials it uses, most notably the leather straps and bands.

Hermès Dressage L'Heure Masquée



ARMANI

EXPECT: SWISS-MADE

The Melting Gold is Armani's first collection of Swiss-made watches. With trusty automatic movements and dials that are satiny, even Mr Armani is a fan: "The automatic gold-plated watch makes me particularly proud."

Armani Melting Gold ARS3004 42MM Automatic



DIOR

EXPECT: REFINEMENT

Dior goes where alpha males fear to tread, with splashes of colour, unusual tactile textures (like feathers and granulated cases) and softer, less macho touches.

Dior Chiffre Rouge A02 38mm Automatic



BVLGARI

EXPECT: THE BEST

The maison bought Gérald Genta watches, whose designs run through Audemars Piguet, IWC and Patek Philippe. The Italian label is serious about playing with the big boys.

Bvlgari Octo Finissimo Tourbillon

BE A SPORT

New season, new styles. Make a bright impression this season with Arrow Sport's vibrant, pop-coloured and nautical ranges



It's a heady cocktail of colours that are bright and checks that are bold – Arrow ups the ante this Spring/Summer. Feast your eyes on sunny solids and mercerized tees in shades of this season's fruits like lemons, key limes, oranges and berries. Play up the dress code with checks that have gone bigger or opt for the classic collection, this time inspired by the American flag with washed shirts and nautical-inspired graphic tees.

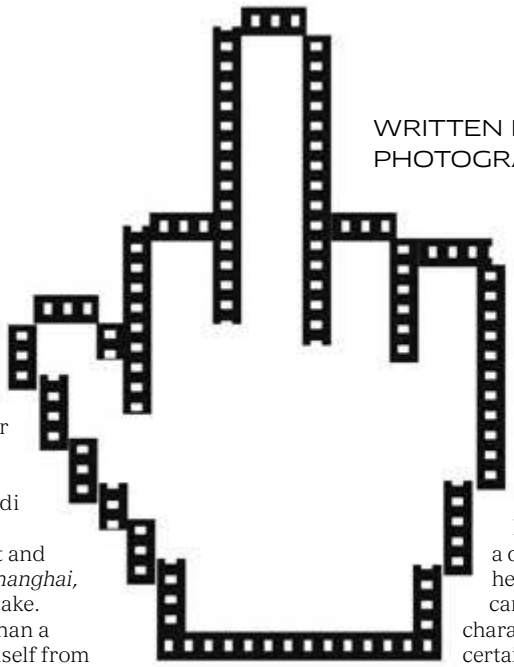
GQ TIP: Always finish strong – with a smart fedora, a slick jacket or a trendy paper-thin wool-knit tie

YOUR MUST-HAVE FIELD GUIDE TO DRESSING WELL THIS SUMMER

ARROW
USA·1851

A tête-à-tête WITH Dibakar 'Fuck Bollywood' Banerjee

WRITTEN BY **ANIL THAKRANEY**
PHOTOGRAPHED BY **ABHEET GIDWANI**



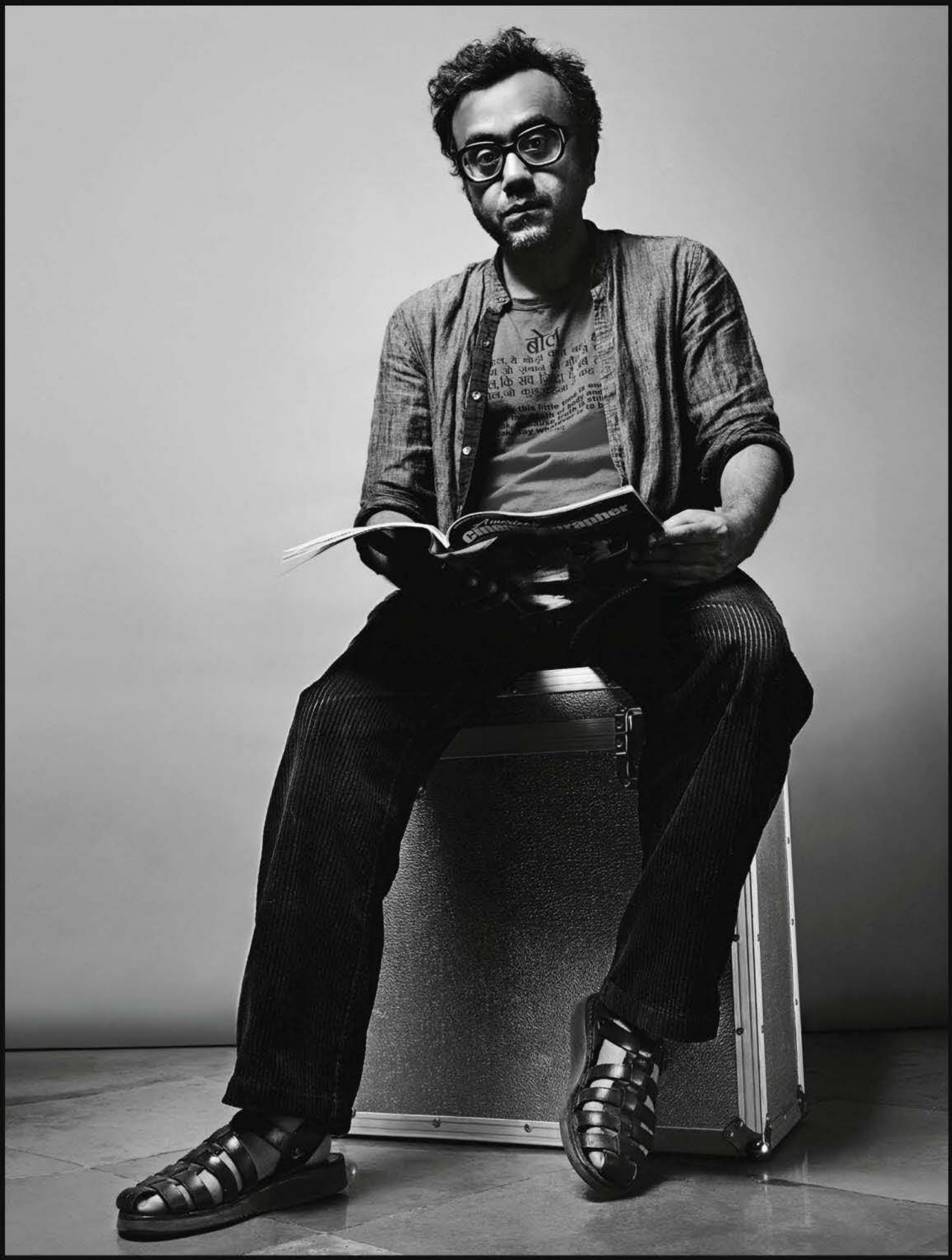
Along with fellow director Anurag Kashyap, Dibakar Banerjee can take a decent cut of credit for reshaping Hindi cinema in recent times. His films deal with hard issues, speak the language of the street and contain no item songs – except that one in *Shanghai*, which Banerjee readily concedes was a mistake. The 45-year-old looks more like an IT geek than a film-maker, and says he wants to isolate himself from Bollywood, choosing to operate out of Mumbai's severely unhappening Lalbaug neighbourhood, far from the suburban constellations of movie stars. Banerjee isn't a director who wants the viewer to escape into fantasyland, he wants his work to provoke thought, and with *Khosla Ka Ghosla, Oye Lucky! Lucky Oye!, Shanghai* and *Love Sex Aur Dhokha*, he's been able to stay fringe without putting mainstream audiences to sleep. We catch up with Banerjee high in his tower, overlooking a mid-town slum, ahead of his latest, *Detective Byomkesh Bakshy!*, a gritty crime thriller set in 1943 Calcutta.

What's the film about? Did you want to create a kind of local Sherlock?
The detective is not a new character. Byomkesh Bakshi has been around since 1933. And in the early Nineties there used to be a famous TV series based on the character.

Maybe that's as good as creating a new character. Anyone under 30 probably wouldn't have heard of the guy.
Agreed. I've been a fan of detective fiction since I was 13. And being a Bengali kid living in Delhi, having a number of Bengali books lying around the house, I used to be hungry to connect with the "mythical" city of Calcutta, which was the lodestone of everything. According to Bengali culture, the biggest writers, painters, politicians, etc, were in Calcutta. I started reading fictional detective stories from there, because Bengali literature has had a fascinating history of detective fiction dating way back to the late 19th century. I realized that a detective character and the city in which he operates are totally interconnected – you cannot have an interesting fictional detective character without a thriving urban culture of a certain type around it. The Delhi of *Oye Lucky* and *Khosla Ka Ghosla*, where I grew up, was a city of class, money, violence, conflict, but there was nothing mysterious about it, there was no mystery in my life. What attracted me to the Calcutta of the Thirties and Forties is this whole thing about dark secrets, smoky lanes, vintage cars, old colonial buildings. That gives you a world that is a little more innocent than the world we live in, and that innocence throws up crime in a much more interesting way, a purer way.

And yet you'll need to sex it up for today's audiences, right? Was there any attempt at idiot-proofing here?
All I have tried to do is be faithful to the romanticism of that era, the way I felt it while reading about it as a teenager. I want the audiences to feel the same rush. That's the fundamental creative impulse of the film. However, my mind is in 2015, so while we transported ourselves to the Forties, we've used contemporary techniques and stylistic devices; it's fast-paced with wry humour. We find ourselves in 1943 because of time travel, but our language is completely contemporary. So what you end up watching is history in the present. It's not a period film.

You tend to experiment with different genres of cinema. Is that a way of challenging yourself?
I can't repeat myself because I get bored very easily. The other thing is a film takes two years to make, and in that time you grow, you >


बोल



"I NEVER CAME TO BOLLYWOOD, I CAME TO BOMBAY"

change as a person. So the person who made *Khosla Ka Ghosla*, by the time he goes on to make *Oye Lucky*, is not the same person – in fact it would be bad news if he continued to be the same person. With time, my instincts, my concerns, my urges change. The things I used to be angry about two years ago, I have made peace with them. And yes, I probably do like the challenge.

What is the most unique quality Dibakar the Director brings to his work?
[Thinks.] The contrast and surprise of everyday life. I was once involved in a car accident in Delhi, and as it typically happens, a fight erupted. Now, one of the guys from the other car recognized me and started discussing my films, even as the rest were busy fighting! That scene is vintage me, I could have written that script. *[Laughs.]* For example, in my new film, there's a scene where the detective and his close friends are almost killed inside a gangster's hideout. At the same time, in the same room, there are two guys playing Mahjong. I like doing contrast, it excites me.

You grew up in Karol Bagh, far removed from showbiz. When and how did the bug bite?
It happened around the 11th standard. I used to write, sketch, sing, compose – I would play for the school choir. It occurred to me that if I want to include all of these things in one thing, cinema would be a good candidate. I remember being fascinated by the Hindi and regional films they used to show on Doordarshan. I watched a number of foreign classics as well.

Which film-makers' work had the most impact on you?
Martin Scorsese, Stanley Kubrick and Satyajit Ray.

I'm told your testosterone-charged Karol Bagh gang would routinely rent porn films to get off, and once ended up renting *Taxi Driver* by mistake.
[Laughs.] Boss, you can't possibly get off in a communal circle!

I wouldn't rule it out with those Delhi lads…
[Laughs more.] Well, I have never done that. What happened is that we used to mainly rent action films and sometimes the naughty stuff. It used to be a marathon viewing session, we would start at ten in the morning and it would go on till six in the evening. A friend once asked for *Confessions Of A Taxi Driver*, a soft porn film, and the video guy sent us *Taxi Driver*. We started watching it and waited for the sex scenes to start, and they wouldn't! And at the same time we were so captivated, we discussed the film for days thereafter. That film had a profound effect on me.

Perhaps that's why your cinema is rooted in realism, not the typical Bollywood escapist stuff.
That's partly right. I was bored of Hindi films by the late Eighties. Nineties Hindi cinema completely passed me by. Also, because of my stint at NID (National Institute of Design), I got the opportunity to watch classics from all over the world. So I grew up on my own vision, my own mish-mash of all the influences that I had. And my primary influence was the city I used to live in, Delhi. Hence *Khosla Ka Ghosla* and *Oye Lucky*. So there was no conscious decision to avoid escapism, it's just that I was bored of Hindi films. The only exceptions were *Parinda* and *Bandit Queen*. Both these films were game-changers for me.

You were an ad film-maker for many years. How did that experience help you with cinema?
It helped in terms of visual preparation. It taught me how to treat each frame as a place of respect. Also, ad films need to pack in a lot of quality on a limited budget, so that helped make me disciplined and responsible.

Which is why you feel uncomfortable working in the generally undisciplined, star-obsessed world of Bollywood?
I have had a very lucky career, I have never done films with huge stars. So I've never paid any attention to that, it's not been important to me, and that's why it's passed me by. You are as affected by something as the importance you give to it. For me scale doesn't matter as much as depth.

Which is probably why you chose to live in a mid-town mill area over somewhere like Lokhandwala?
It's partly deliberate, though it didn't start off like that. It's because I fell in love with this part of town. The mill area grounds me to the changing history of Bombay. *Shanghai* couldn't have been made if I hadn't lived here. I never came to Bollywood, I came to Bombay. *[Smiles]*

I have a hunch that your thing is: I will live in the mill area, I will work with young actors, I will experiment with realism, I will show them how it's done.
The last bit is not important to me. *[Laughs.]* Just as I am not interested in many things, many things aren't interested in me. What matters is when I am here, I feel happy, I feel rooted. Secondly, because I am not in Juhu or Lokhandwala, I am so far away from the industry gossip and the completely time-wasting and debilitating effect of useless shop talk and anxiety. Shop talk and anxiety are constant companions of the film world because it's a very unpredictable industry. And if you start wallowing in it, it affects your work. Being here helps me insulate myself from all that.

I must say *Shanghai* didn't work for me. It didn't tell me anything I didn't already know, I found it immensely boring.
I haven't watched *Shanghai*, so I don't know. I will only form an opinion on it four years from now. I have just about got objective about *Khosla* and *Oye Lucky*. Once I finish a film, it ceases to exist in my mind. Because the most interesting and vital part for me is the process of making a film. I can't bear to watch my own films. It's painful.

A goon called Bunty threatened to have you killed. What did you do to him?
Bunty was a character in *Oye Lucky*. A real-life gangster called Bunty imagined I had made millions off a film based on his life, and got pissed off. He came out of jail soon after *Oye Lucky* was released, and I think the Pune police caught him when he claimed he was on his way to Mumbai to bump me off. He was texting me as well.

Hope he's no longer bothering you.
Haven't heard from him in two years.

Perhaps he watched *Shanghai* and moved on.
[Laughs.]



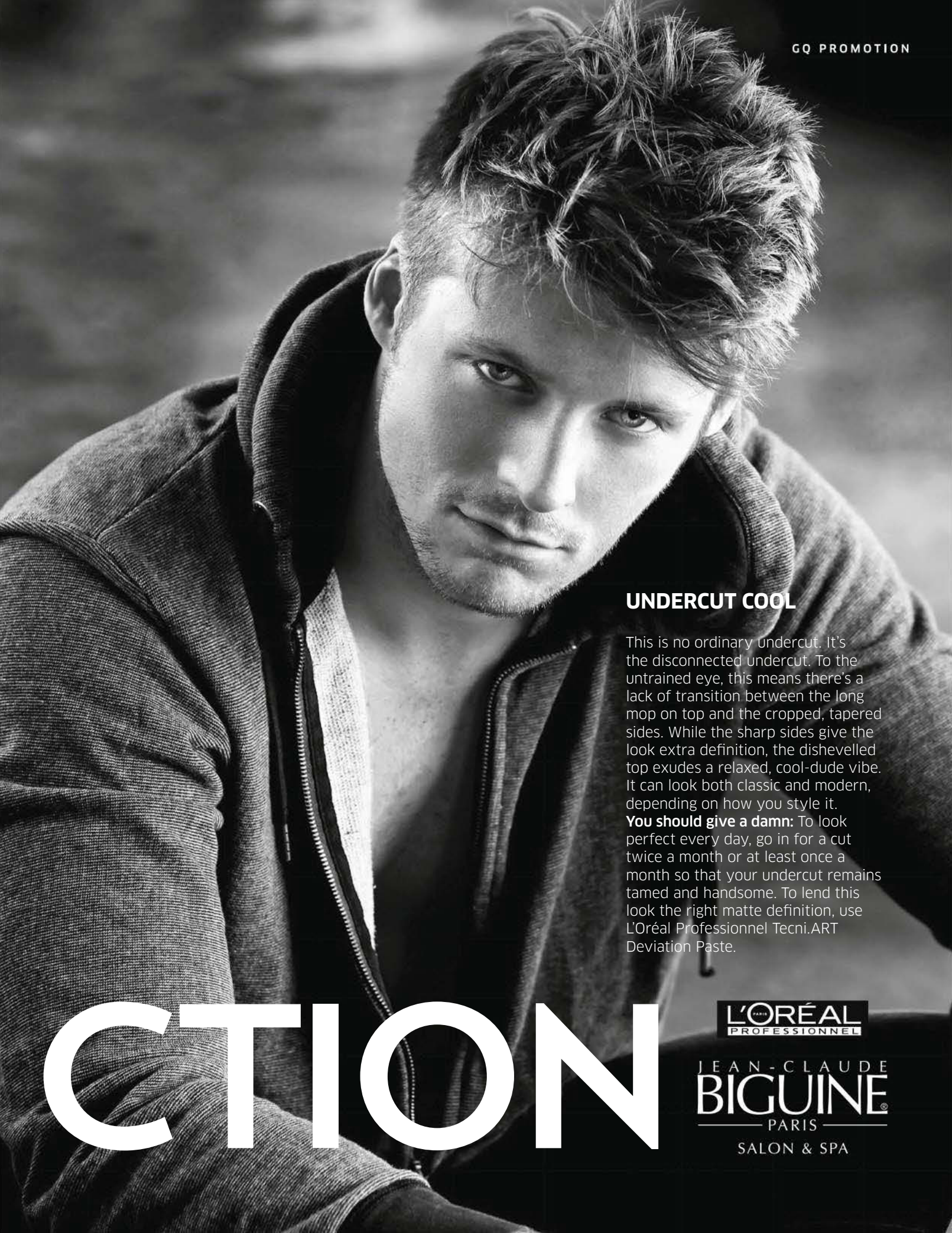
MANE ATTRA

Break in spring/summer with messy-classy dos that'll demand everyone's attention. Jean-Claude Biguine shows you how

WINDSWEPT SWAG

Show off your foreheads men and go windswept this season. This classic tousled look has just the right amount of "bed head" and volume that you want. Long on top and short on the sides, it's got a neat balance that'll make you look slick in the boardroom and at the bar. More layers give you more versatility – lift it up, move it around, mess it up with your fingers and boom – you get a polished, minimalist, sexy look. Fair warning: over-the-top messy has lost its mojo.

Keep it looking sexy: For textured cuts, maintenance is key. So you should visit your barber for a haircut once in three weeks. For upkeep of the shine and definition, use L'Oréal Professionnel Tecni.ART Metallic Gloss.



UNDERCUT COOL

This is no ordinary undercut. It's the disconnected undercut. To the untrained eye, this means there's a lack of transition between the long mop on top and the cropped, tapered sides. While the sharp sides give the look extra definition, the dishevelled top exudes a relaxed, cool-dude vibe. It can look both classic and modern, depending on how you style it.

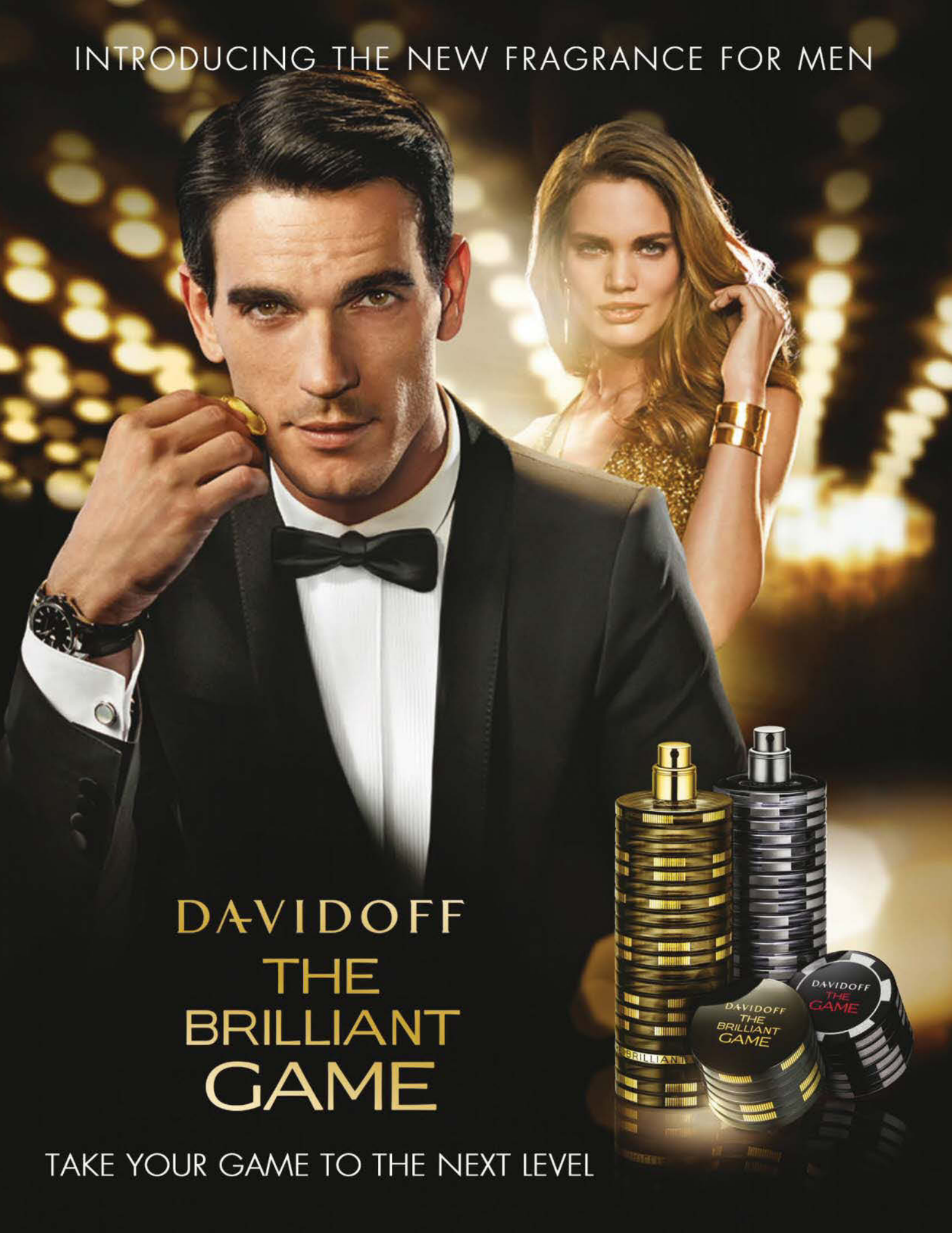
You should give a damn: To look perfect every day, go in for a cut twice a month or at least once a month so that your undercut remains tamed and handsome. To lend this look the right matte definition, use L'Oréal Professionnel Tecni.ART Deviation Paste.

CTION

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INTRODUCING THE NEW FRAGRANCE FOR MEN
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DAVIDOFF THE GAME

GQ

MENSWEAR REPORT



EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW TO STAY COOL IN THE HEAT

WHAT



T

SPRING/ SUMMER 2015



WEAR

EDITED BY **VIJENDRA BHARDWAJ** & **SHIVANGI LOLAYEKAR**

NOW







IMAGE: INDIGITAL MEDIA (RAMP), CORBIS (KRAVITZ)


DOLCE & GABBANA


SALVATORE FERRAGAMO



BURBERRY

MAN ON THE *MOVE*


LOUIS VUITTON


SAINT LAURENT

For the longest time, Summer was the fashion universe's unloved step-child. While Winter always delivered a bounty of tweeds and cashmeres with throws and coat collars to pop, Summer's fashion gods flung Hawaiian shirts and chinos at us and wished us luck. Not anymore. Designers have harbingered a season of travel and adventure with bold colours and bolder ambitions.

The moment hit home when Kim Jones brought out fuchsia and khaki flightsuits and mirror-work denim for Louis Vuitton, in homage to Jaipur. Dolce & Gabbana hit the bull's eye bringing Spanish matadors down the runway. Hedi Slimane continued last season's rock 'n' roll theme but with a Seventies California vibe. Ferragamo looked at Africa and Tom Ford updated the Texan cowboy. Designers were asking everyone – not just seasoned globetrotters but rockers, prepsters, tech geeks, fashion freaks, science majors, playboys and, well, you – to get up and travel. And to look stylish while you're at it.


TOM FORD


BRIONI

GQ MICRO TRENDS

IT'S A BUD THING

Florals have gone from being popular to ubiquitous. You may as well get your bloom on too.


KENZO


RAF SIMONS FOR ADIDAS ORIGINALS

TRAINING HARD

At this point, it's a misnomer to call luxury trainers a trend. They're here to stay, and have grabbed the attention of everyone from Louis Vuitton and Dior Homme to Kenzo. And they're worn by *GQ* cover stars as much as mainstream suits. Top front-row style: Adidas Stan Smiths.



CRAIG GREEN

IT'S RISING, SON

Take it from us: Japan's the new fashion mecca of the world, and it couldn't have been more obvious than with Craig Green's martial arts-inspired silhouettes and Kabuki prints at Alexander McQueen.

IMAGE: INDIGITAL MEDIA, SHUTTERSTOCK (STAMPS)



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GQ's Eye

Our pick of the collections that rocked and the creators who shocked



1



Louis Vuitton's passage to India

Kim Jones may have travelled to South America for the Winter, but this season he's landed on Indian turf for a colour-happy Summer. Louis Vuitton's creative director paid homage to Jaipur and called out to the Rajput royals who've long been patrons of the brand. The result: fresh-as-fuck mock-mirror bombers and khaki flight suits even Welsh actor Luke Evans and supermodel/actor Jon Kortajarena were salivating over from the front row.

2



Mixing it up at Dior Homme

Barely had we soaked in Winter's rosette-print striped jackets before Kris Van Assche sent out another ace. Blending contrasting ideas – sporty and formal, bohemian and bourgeoisie – Dior Homme's creative director chose denim and graphic art to nail the whole luxe streetwear vibe.





3

Jungle all the way at Salvatore Ferragamo

The giraffe is the new king of the jungle – at least according to Massimiliano Giornetti. Suits came with sporty accents, safari jackets made a comeback – and tiny giraffe illustrations were all over. Come to think of it, Giornetti may have imagined this entire collection while wandering through the Masai Mara.



IMAGE: INDIGITAL MEDIA, REX FEATURES, AFP



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4

Prints charming at Hermès

After an almost all-black collection, Véronique Nichanian went signature Hermès and put out a burst of striking prints. As you'd expect from the French powerhouse, the outcome was understated, and never chaotic.







5

New age at Ermenegildo Zegna

Stefano Pilati did what only he could: he referenced Thirties intellectuals in pinstripe suits, and then threw quirky details like loops dangling from T-shirt hems and unfinished trouser cuffs into the mix. Forget transitioning from work to the bar. In Pilati's world, you're going straight to the after-party.





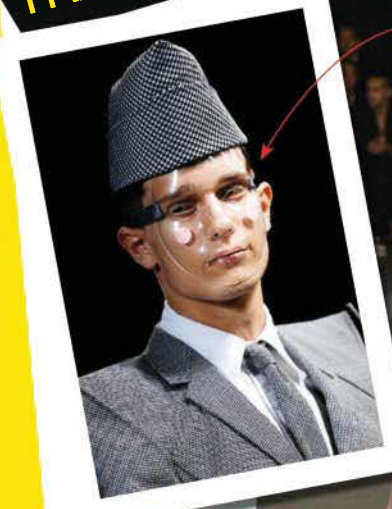
CHINESE WHISPERS AT LC:M

The occasion may have been intimate but the impact of Chinese label SANKUANZ was massive. Sponsored by *GQ* China, Shangguan Zhe had his models sporting animated limbs and masks. That front-row seaters kept their phones down and actually watched the show was testament enough.

GOING THE WHOLE HOG AT VIVIENNE WESTWOOD

The anarchist queen of British fashion is all about making noise. Putting out a strong message about the horrors of industrial farming, Dame Westwood and partner-designer Andreas Kronthaler sent their models out wearing pig snouts.

6 EXTREME TRANSFORMATIONS





RAD ATTACK AT THOM BROWNE

Trust Thom Browne to stir up up the fashion world: this time, amalgamating classic Prince of Wales checks and protruding suits – and topping it off with plastic face masks on models strutting to the *Tron* soundtrack. Futuristic.

IMAGE: INDIGITAL MEDIA, REX FEATURES



Exclusively on amazon.in





SEVENTIES COWBOY AT TOM FORD

Double denim? At Tom Ford? Hell yeah. The king of luxe tuxes and (now) trainers hit up Texas for a lesson in Western dressing. And it came with all the fixings – slinky scarves, jeans in a multitude of treatments and sturdy boots. Yee-haw.

GQ ENDORSES: The sumptuous croc trainers.







EASY SWAGGER AT JOHN VARVATOS

After going hard rock 'n' roll last season, fashion's rebel John Varvatos turned it down a notch with a more dandy touch: cutaway jackets in black, white and steel.





7 NEW DIRECTION

CANALI'S DOUBLE WHAMMY

Celebrating its 80th birthday last year, Canali seemed to be in with the old – and in with the new. First, it brought creative consultant Andrea Pomilio on board. And then hit a home run with a collection full of sports bombers and checked trousers.





DIOR HOMME

Splattered paint across rose petals on illustrated cards that doubled up as swish stationery.

Impressive invitations



SAINT LAURENT

Extending his rock repertoire to include psychedlia, Hedi Slimane sent out a black book of etchings by San Francisco artist Bruce Conner.



KENZO

An oversized key ring of mini Eiffel Tower souvenirs served as the ideal precursor to the Paris-inspired show.

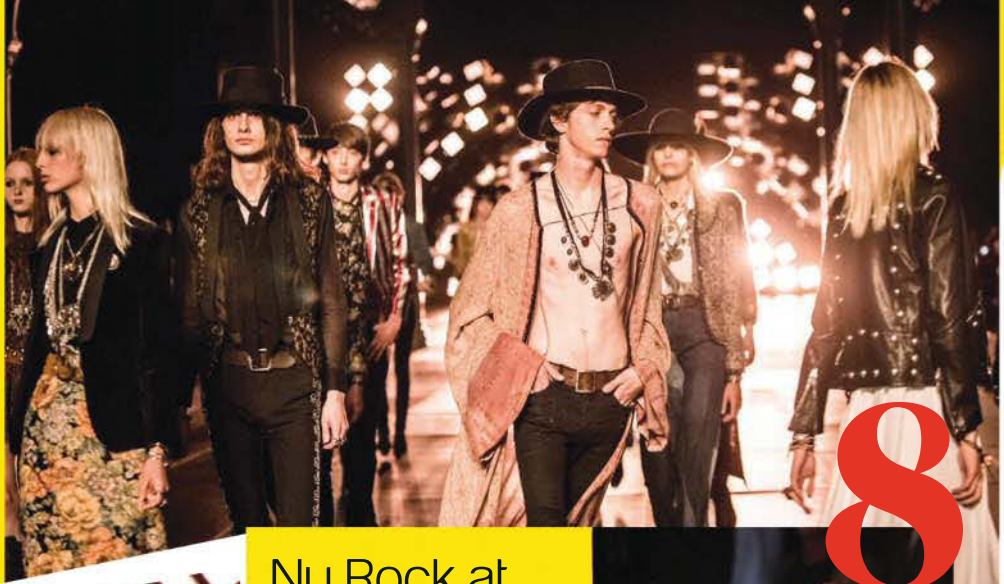
IMAGE: INDIGITAL MEDIA



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8

Nu Rock at Saint Laurent

In his fourth year at the house that the cool kids call SLP, Hedi Slimane continued to explore every dark corner of rock 'n' roll. He had caped crusaders, cowboy boots and a cult casting that could've easily come out of a time machine circa California in the Seventies. Bands – Swim Deep, Skinnybones, Froth, The Invaders, Los Rips – doubled as models, much to the delight of Lenny Kravitz.







DAZED PARTY
An arts space underneath Waterloo Station doubling up as a party venue? Trust *Dazed & Confused* to pull this off at LC:M.



IMAGE: INDIGITAL MEDIA, AFP, REX FEATURES, GETTY IMAGES

9

Summer voyage at Richard James

In Sir James' court, men paraded khaki, a full fuchsia suit and map print silhouettes that made us want to take the next flight out to the Bahamas.









SINGIN' IN THE RAIN AT KENZO
What's better than sitting in the rain, with the Seine on one side, the Eiffel Tower on the other, watching Kenzo's striking collection? Giant polka-dotted prints and holographic patched coats made it worth getting wet.

10 COOLEST SETTINGS

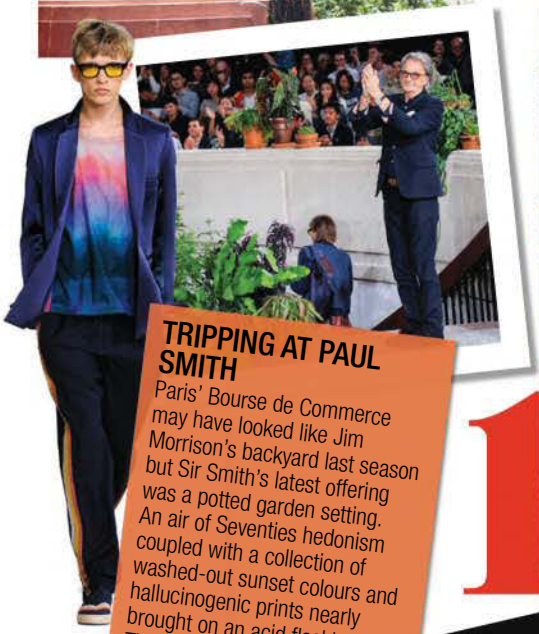




BURBERRY'S BRITISH STAMP

A buzzing venue at Hyde Park, pitchers of Pimm's making the rounds and singer-songwriter Benjamin Clementine singing "London's Calling You" – Christopher Bailey went no-holds-barred British on us. The collection was no exception: floppy hats and Burberry-bound sketchbooks were inspired by British traveller Bruce Chatwin.





TRIPPING AT PAUL SMITH

Paris' Bourse de Commerce may have looked like Jim Morrison's backyard last season but Sir Smith's latest offering was a potted garden setting. An air of Seventies hedonism coupled with a collection of washed-out sunset colours and hallucinogenic prints nearly brought on an acid flashback. Think *Fear And Loathing In Las Vegas*, but without the vomiting.

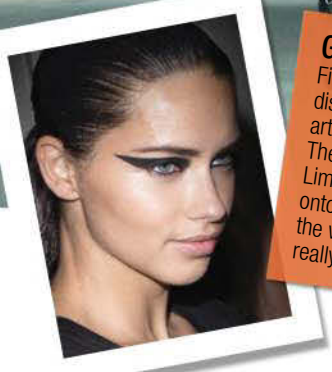






GIVENCHY'S MAN POWER

First, Riccardo Tisci suspended a dismantled 1964 Reims Cessna F172E by artist Paul Veroude over his models' heads. Then, fashion's bad boy brought Adriana Lima, Candice Swanepoel and Irina Shayk onto the runway. Hard masculine gear and the world's hottest women? That's all a man really needs. Very clever, Mr Tisci.





DOLCE VITA AT TOD'S

Instead of a runway show, Tod's held a charming presentation that felt like a Gentlemen's Club. The Italian brand's bubble-bottomed gomminos were found between screens showing videos of iconic style and style icons. And in the middle of the whole thing was a flaming yellow 1966 Ferrari 275 GTB 4 once driven by Steve McQueen.



Bright light

It used to be common fashion wisdom that women were colour-crazy and men would only wear coloured ties. But menswear's limitless appetite for bright hues in recent times has blown that theory out of the water. Pistachio green, Naples yellow, pumpkin, moss, plum, lilac and fuchsia are the new black.

GQ STYLE TIP

Head-to-hem colour is best left to the pros – Depp, Beckham and Virat. Or are you in their league?

IMAGE: INDIGITAL MEDIA (RAMP), REX FEATURES

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Denim

It's not that denim ever went out of style – insert gratuitous name checks of guys like Elvis and Pharrell here – but the movement's gotten so strong, even Tom Ford couldn't help but join the jean pool. PS: Burberry, Yohji Yamamoto, Dior Homme and Prada are also into the blue.

TOM FORD

YOHJI YAMAMOTO

FENDI

MOSCHINO

JUNYA WATANABE

BURBERRY

GQ STYLE TIP
Mix and match khaki and blue.

"I wish I had invented blue jeans. They have expression, modesty, sex appeal, simplicity – all I hope for in my clothes."
–Yves Saint Laurent

The King rocking double denim, circa 1962

PRADA

DIOR HOMME

KENZO

BALLY

DSQUARED2

IMAGE: INDIGITAL MEDIA (RAMP), REX FEATURES



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RARE RABBIT

"That wind you can feel is me breathing down your neck. Next time, I'll have you.."

–James Hunt, *Rush*



The origin of James Hunt and Niki Lauda's infamous rivalry

Sport

Is that next-level conceptual fashion or the Ghostbusters SWAT suit, minus the infrared goggles? Answer: For designers this season, it's a little bit of both. Techno fabrics, functional details, parkas, pullers, zippers and drawstrings are everywhere. All you have to do is get in the ring.



EMPORIO ARMANI



CALVIN KLEIN



BOTTEGA VENETA



CANALI



E. TAUTZ

CORNELIANI



Z ZEGNA

GQ STYLE TIP

The trench has competition. Big waterproof field coats are summer's biggest draw to save you from the sun and showers.



DUNHILL



LOUIS VUITTON



DSQUARED2

IMAGE: INDIGITAL MEDIA (RAMP), REX FEATURES



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EMPORIO ARMANI



DIOR HOMME



MANISH MALHOTRA

GQ STYLE TIP

For bold stripes, stick to a single, strong piece like Dior Homme. If you're going all out, keep it classic pinstripe like Dunhill. Remember: vertical = looking thinner; horizontal = not so much.

"With the White Stripes we were trying to trick people into not realizing we were playing the blues."

–Jack White



Pablo Picasso got it right



ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA

GUCCI

CANALI



DUNHILL

Stripes

Mimicking the style moves of an Italian businessman is so 2014. Right now, French minimalism is where it's at, and the stripes of the Marine Nationale lead the way. Even majordomos Gucci and Zegna have moved their references a little to the north. Now it's your turn.

IMAGE: INDIGITAL MEDIA (RAMP), GETTY IMAGES



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Global moving

Have designers taken a leaf out of Jules Vernes' *Around The World In Eighty Days?* Because it seems like the globetrotter just moved to the head of the class. From Kim Jones' tribute to Jaipur for Louis Vuitton to Craig Green's Japanese warrior and from Dolce & Gabbana's Spanish Matadors to Burberry's British throwback, the message was clear: the world is your oyster.

LOUIS VUITTON

SALVATORE FERRAGAMO

DOLCE & GABBANA

"Though we travel the world over to find the beautiful, we must carry it with us or we find it not."

–Ralph Waldo Emerson

GQ STYLE TIP

Summer layering is your best bet. Think loose knits over long voile shirts, linen jackets over kurtas and waistcoats over summer tees.

JOHN VARVATOS

RICHARD JAMES

ANTAR-AGNI

ANN DEMEULEMEESTER

CRAIG GREEN

BURBERRY PRORSUM

IMAGE: INDIGITAL MEDIA (RAMP), GETTY IMAGES


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DIOR HOMME

"The painting has a life of its own. I try to let it come through."
–Jackson Pollock

Art show

John Chamberlain-inspired crayon strokes at Dior Homme, Andy Warhol camo at Dsquared2, Jackson Pollock prints at Alexander Wang – fashion met art, and had multiple babies.

ALEXANDER WANG



Affection by John Chamberlain



DSQUARED2



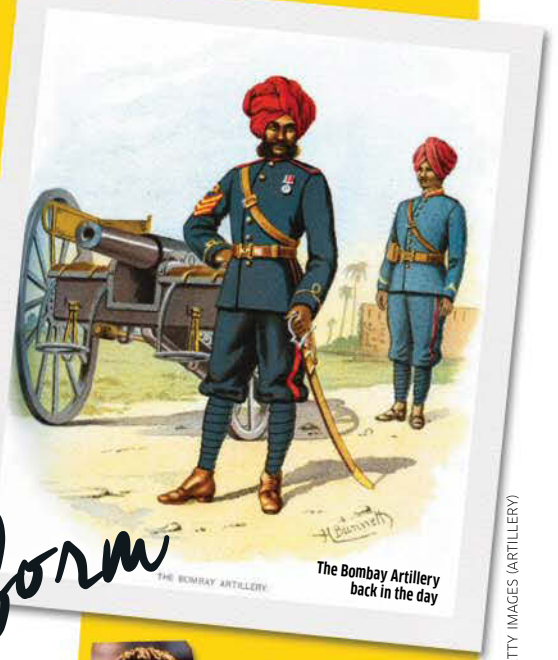
CHRISTOPHER KANE



ALEXANDER MCQUEEN

GQ STYLE TIP
How much is too much? A batik kurta or a tie & dye shirt hits the right stroke.

GQ STYLE TIP
Think: anti-war sentiment with war-inspired clothes.



The Bombay Artillery back in the day

Uniform

You don't have to look like a cadet to command respect. Military peacoats, camo prints, shoulder epaulets and khaki are at the fashion forefront. Get with the program.

"The army teaches boys to think like men."
–Elvis Presley



FRANKIE MORELLO



DIESEL BLACK GOLD



GUCCI



COMME DES GARÇONS



RICHARD JAMES

IMAGE: INDIGITAL MEDIA (RAMP), CORBIS (AFFECTION), GETTY IMAGES (ARTILLERY)



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BEING HUMAN	NIKE	VANS
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Accessories

Little things make a big difference. This summer's impressive accoutrements instantly upgrade your wardrobe.

Trainer-spotting





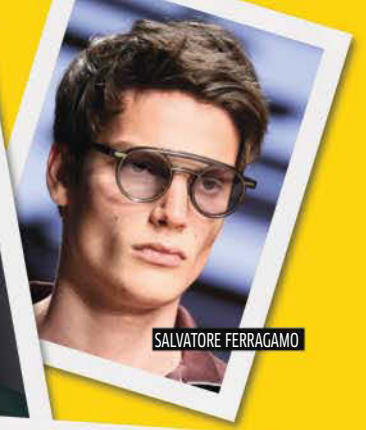




"Fashion is the armour to survive the reality of everyday life."
—BILL CUNNINGHAM

Shades of difference











Big bag theory



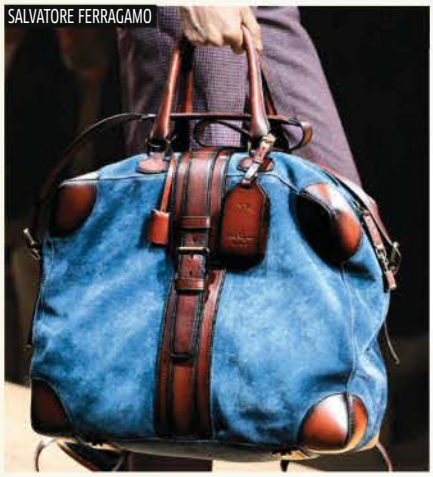




IMAGE: INDIGITAL MEDIA

Leather, you can't eat


GIVENCHY


SALVATORE FERRAGAMO


ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA


GUCCI


COMME DES GARÇONS

GQ ENDORSES



THE COOLEST MESSENGER:
@ **GUCCI** with nautical stripes and a striking monogram.





THE HOTTEST SHOE UPGRADE:
@ **TOD'S**, whose driving moccasins now come with a braided leather detail.



THE BEST LEATHER WALLETS:
@ **DIOR HOMME** with Christian Dior's signature etched into the leather.



THE SEXIEST BAG TRIM:
@ **LOUIS VUITTON** with a swish sun dial attached to a supple leather carryall.




BOTTEGA VENETA


VERSACE

"It's not an experiment if you know it's going to work."
–Jeff Bezos

SINGAPORE'S BEST-KEPT SECRETS REVEALED



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EDITED BY **VARUN GODINHO**

GQ drive

Your definitive guide to the 2015 F1 season

We take the new 5-door Mini Cooper for a spin



POLE TO PODIUM

Expect a game of musical chairs at the front of the grid as Formula One gears up for a second season with new hybrid engines. **Stewart Bell** gives us the inside line



LOOK SHARP
The ugly nose that plagued the 2014 cars has been traded in for a more conventional and smarter look.

Last year signalled a massive shift for Formula One, with hybrid engines shaking things up. And while the sound was more harmonic rumble than wild banshee scream, the racing was white-hot throughout – despite Mercedes AMG's Lewis Hamilton and Nico Rosberg consistently dicing out front. *GQ* previews every team and driver for the season ahead.

THE BIG DEALS

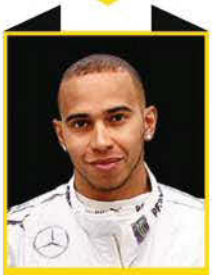
Fernando Alonso
Moves To McLaren Honda

Alonso has left Ferrari, a partnership that began in 2010. In those five seasons, Ferrari couldn't deliver a top-class car to consistently take on then-reigning champs Red Bull. As a result, frustrations brimmed over, heads rolled and the relationship with their star driver soured. Now, he's back with McLaren, with whom he drove from 2007 to 2010 – an incredible move given the animosity that came with that split. Regardless, Alonso and his teammate, 2009 champ Jenson Button, will make a formidable line-up.

Sebastian Vettel
Moves To Scuderia Ferrari

Vettel grew up idolizing fellow countryman, Michael Schumacher, who won five of his seven world titles with Scuderia. An uncompetitive 2014 Red Bull car, teammate Daniel Ricciardo's pace and Alonso's exit from Ferrari were all catalysts in the German's decision to sign with Scuderia. However, he has parachuted into a Ferrari that have lost their way and are now desperately trying to rebuild themselves. Vettel could be the talisman Ferrari need to return to their glory days.

MERCEDES AMG PETRONAS F1 TEAM



LEWIS **HAMILTON**



NICO **ROSBERG**

2014 PERFORMANCE

It was a year of utter domination for the Silver Arrows, with 16 wins and 18 pole positions. Hamilton ended the season with a win at Abu Dhabi, bagging the drivers' title for himself, his second, and the constructors' award for his team. Rosberg too finished on the podium 15 times in 2014.

2015 PROSPECTS

Hamilton will be cool, confident and focused, while Rosberg will be hell-bent on having another crack at the top prize. The German surprised many with his improved form last year, and will surely up the ante this year. After all, racing is in his blood: father Keke was 1982 World Champion.

INFINITI RED BULL RACING



DANIEL **RICCIARDO**



DANIIL **KVYAT**

2014 PERFORMANCE

Red Bull went through the wringer last year, unable to defend their four consecutive constructors' titles. Ricciardo proved a revelation, showing up four-time world champion Vettel in qualifying and staking the season's only non-Mercedes wins in Canada, Hungary and Belgium.

2015 PROSPECTS

The squad are keen to stop their downward spiral. Vettel has moved to Ferrari, and there's no doubt his replacement, Russian rocket Kvyat, and Ricciardo, are both mega quick. But they need the team's Renault engine to perform at optimum levels in order to finish on the podium.

WILLIAMS MARTINI RACING



FELIPE **MASSA**



VALTTERI **BOTTAS**

2014 PERFORMANCE

Williams' resurgence was one of the most heart-warming stories of the year, with nine podiums – six alone from Bottas, the brilliant young Finn who's a future world champion, no doubt. Veteran racer Massa took the only non-Silver Arrows pole in Austria, and showed that he's still got plenty of fight.

2015 PROSPECTS

Smart management has brought this historic team back from the brink of destruction. With technical guru Pat Symonds supported by chief designer Ed Wood, aero head Jason Somerville and head of vehicle performance Rob Smedly, Williams are expected to raise their game even further.

SCUDERIA FERRARI



SEBASTIAN **VETTEL**



KIMI **RÄIKKÖNEN**

2014 PERFORMANCE

The downward dash of F1's greatest team continued. And while the F14T car was both underpowered and difficult to handle, Fernando Alonso still amassed 161 points and two podiums – proving his solid-gold worth once again. The fiery Räikkönen, on the other hand, struggled right through the season.

2015 PROSPECTS

The HR office at Ferrari has been working overtime, with a mass exodus of staff – including Alonso to McLaren and much-loved bossman Luca di Montezemolo to the board of the Formula One group. On the other hand, Ferrari signed on Vettel, in a bid to reverse their fortunes.

IMAGE: REX FEATURES, GETTY IMAGES

McLAREN HONDA



FERNANDO **ALONSO**



JENSON **BUTTON**

2014 PERFORMANCE

It was another tough season for McLaren, their last using a Mercedes engine. Former world champion Button joined rookie Kevin Magnussen, and while the pair took an impressive double podium at the first round in Australia, they couldn't do so again for any of the races that followed.

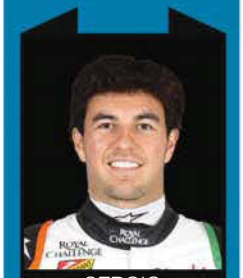
2015 PROSPECTS

Magnussen has been shunted out and replaced with two-time world champion Alonso. That gives the British team two ace drivers, in addition to a brand-new Honda engine this season. Could it be 1988 (when Senna and Prost won 15 out of 16 Grands Prix) for McLaren all over again?

SAHARA FORCE INDIA F1 TEAM



NICO **HÜLKENBERG**



SERGIO **PÉREZ**

2014 PERFORMANCE

Force India had a lot going for them with two strong drivers in Pérez and Hülkenberg, and a good engine at the start of 2014. However, they didn't commit to a constant stream of engine updates as the season progressed and lost their position among the top five constructors after the summer break.

2015 PROSPECTS

Unless they learn to quickly adapt and tweak their engine to suit racing conditions through 2015, they will once again start strong (as they did last year) and then lose steam and move down the pecking order. The driver line-up remains the same.

SCUDERIA TORO ROSSO



MAX **VERSTAPPEN**



CARLOS **SAINZ JR**

2014 PERFORMANCE

Drivers Jean-Éric Vergne and rookie Daniil Kvyat mostly finished in the top 10 – when the STR9 car didn't break down. The team's used as a finishing school for Red Bull Racing, who picked up the precocious Kvyat this year. Vergne, though, has been left out in the cold and heads to Ferrari as a test driver.

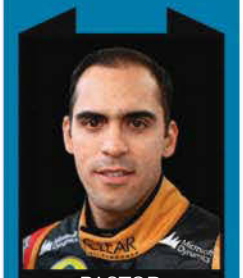
2015 PROSPECTS

When 17-year-old Verstappen straps in this month, he will become the youngest driver in F1 history. Little wonder then that he's been referred to as a once-in-a-generation racer, with comparisons to Ayrton Senna only growing louder. Carlos Sainz Jr is the 2014 Formula Renault 3.5 Series champion.

LOTUS F1 TEAM



ROMAIN **GROSJEAN**



PASTOR **MALDONADO**

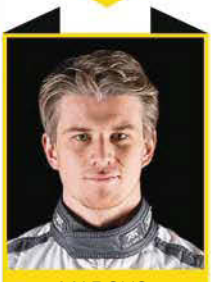
2014 PERFORMANCE

Last year was a nightmare for Lotus. The car's chassis was unstable and unpredictable, and the Renault engine lacked grunt. Barring three races, Grosjean – a rising star in 2013 known for his aggressive driving style – and teammate Maldonado never managed to finish in the top 10.

2015 PROSPECTS

Lotus are set to move up the grid this year, with their Renault engines being traded in for class-leading Mercedes-Benz power units. If they can produce a tidy chassis and get to grips with the new Benz grunt, they might find themselves on par with Force India and even finish among the top five constructors.

SAUBER F1 TEAM



MARCUS **ERICSSON**



FELIPE **NASR**

2014 PERFORMANCE

Last year, this Swiss team endured their worst season ever, netting no points. Adrian Sutil came close with 11th place in Australia and Hungary, but Esteban Gutiérrez lagged behind. The team also suffered from a cash crunch, and even the much-publicized Russian investment never materialized.

2015 PROSPECTS

It's tough to predict where Sauber will be in 2015 with resources tight. Adding to their woes are two new drivers: ex-Caterham racer Ericsson and former Williams test driver Nasr, who will need to do much in order to master the Ferrari engines powering the team's cars.

F1 2015 THE CALENDAR

Australia (Melbourne)	Mar 13 - 15
Malaysia (Kuala Lumpur)	Mar 27 - 29
China (Shanghai)	Apr 10 - 12
Bahrain (Sakhir)	Apr 17 - 19
Spain (Catalunya)	May 08 - 10
Monaco (Monte Carlo)	May 22 - 24
Canada (Montréal)	Jun 05 - 07
Austria (Spielberg)	Jun 19 - 21
Great Britain (Silverstone)	Jul 03 - 05
Germany (TBA)	Jul 17 - 19
Hungary (Budapest)	Jul 24 - 26
Belgium (Spa-Francorchamps)	Aug 21 - 23
Italy (Monza)	Sep 04 - 06
Singapore (Singapore)	Sep 18 - 20
Japan (Suzuka)	Sep 25 - 27
Russia (Sochi)	Oct 09 - 11
United States (Austin)	Oct 23 - 25
Mexico (Mexico City)	Oct 30 - Nov 01
Brazil (São Paulo)	Nov 13 - 15
Abu Dhabi (Yas Marina)	Nov 27 - 29

GQ PREDICTS

Mercedes will lead the pack, and expect Rosberg to be in top form – eager to show up reigning world champ Hamilton. Williams could grab their first win since 2012. Ferrari are in a mess, but they promise that the engine they've developed for 2015 is a humdinger. Plus, they've got Vettel on board. Red Bull's Renault engines must fire on all cylinders or they'll be in the market for another supplier next season.



All grown up

Enormously practical. Blisteringly quick. Super sexy. What's not to love about the new 5-door Mini Cooper, asks **Varun Godinho**

The first Cooper was born on the race track. John Cooper's eponymous Cooper Car Company started out tuning up cars for private playboy racers after the Second World War and, by the end of the Forties, had begun building single-seater high-powered machines for Formula One. In their 19-year F1 history, from 1950-1969, the team bagged two constructors' championships, won several races and had champions like Stirling Moss and Jack Brabham piloting their machines.

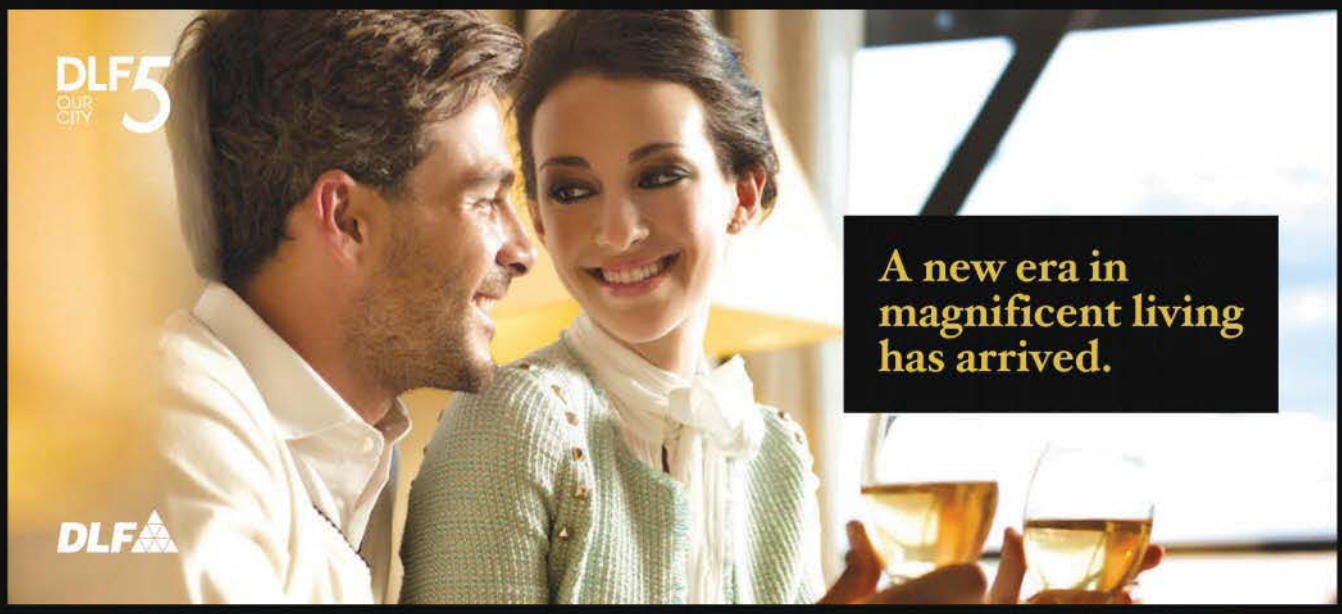
BRING THE HATCH BACK

BMW's endgame is to make this pocket rocket an urban ride for millennials, without having to hang up those racing boots

Midway through Cooper's F1 sojourn, the company decided to try its hand at rally racing. It needed a two-seater car, so it collaborated with British Motor Corporation's lightweight Mini. The deliciously rev-happy Mini Cooper was born in 1961 as a rally car – with a road-legal variant, too.

Needless to say, I had no trouble finding, and pinning, the throttle on my 2015 Mini Cooper D. This hot hatch has stubbornly remained a three-door, built for two (a cramped backseat existed, but it was best to throw your backpack there rather than punish a third passenger) for over four decades, until now. This edition has five doors, with space for four people.

Which makes sense, when you consider that its owner, BMW, has created something of an urban ride with this machine. I find features here that I never thought I would in a bona fide track rat: sat-nav →







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on an oversized round display in the dash, colourful ambient lighting and a back that's stretched to accommodate two more doors with acres of legroom for the rear passengers. Plus, a voluminous 288-litre boot.

The good thing, though, is that in spite of these mods, this car still looks and rides like its predecessors. It has a stubby body and bulbous bug-eyed headlights that attract even more attention with their daytime-running LEDs. And despite the additional 30kg in weight – thanks to those two extra doors and that stretched chassis – this new car has a 0-100kph timing that comes up quicker, and a higher top speed, than the three-door variant. Mr John Cooper rests in peace.

There's a loud throaty rumble that filters through to the cabin even with the windows up, and

DID YOU KNOW?

The Mini, conceived by engineer and designer Alec Issigonis in 1959, was a mash-up between two legendary cars: the Morris Minor and the Austin Seven. The Minor had such a reliable engine that even four decades after its production ceased, you'd have little trouble coming across one in impeccable condition in the second-hand market. The Austin Seven was the world's first mass-produced car with a conventional "control" layout – brake in the centre, clutch to the left and accelerator to the right.



ALL ROUNDER
The Cooper's circular display mimics the car's preference for curves over edges

it all adds to a tactile sensory experience that works perfectly well for this go-kart-esque ride. I'm gripping a tiny steering wheel, sitting snug and low in my bucket seat, keeping an eye on my speed on a heads-up display that pops out of the dash – this is a racy city slicker that hasn't been domesticated.

The one thing I sorely miss in this pocket rocket, though, is a manual gearshift. And the six-speed automatic doesn't come with a set of paddles behind the wheel, either.

IT'S A FREE-SPIRITED LITTLE SCAMP, AND THERE'S ALWAYS A SENSE OF URGENCY IN THE WAY IT DRIVES

VITAL STATS

MINI COOPER D
Five doors; the engine though remains the same as the three-door hatch

ENGINE
114hp; 1.5-litre three-cylinder; 270Nm @1,750rpm

PERFORMANCE
0-100kph in 6.7 sec

top speed
233kph

Price
₹35.2lakh (ex-showroom)

GQ TEST DRIVE

THE RIVALS

FIAT ABARTH 595 COMPETIZIONE



The Fiat 500 has had far too many variations in the past decade for us to keep track of, but the Competizione is the one we love the most. More importantly, this hatch may be coming to India this year. Expect a mega 1.5-litre engine that produces 158hp of sheer power.

MERCEDES-BENZ A45AMG



Mercedes' A-Class, like the Cooper, is a front-wheel drive that ensures you get your fair share of sideways fun. Add to it an AMG badge and you get a machine that's insanely quick, too. With a 0-100kph time of just 4.6 seconds, this one's an absolute blast to drive.

That's collateral, though, that many city-dwelling folks, BMW's target buyers for this urban hatch, are willing to trade for the convenience of nipping through traffic.

The hyper-responsive handling of the car means that in the city I can outpace bikers and, if I see a narrow opening in the next lane, take it. It's a free-spirited, rambunctious little scamp, this one, and there's always a sense of urgency in the way it drives. It's when I take it outside the city and on the highway that I can fully enjoy its "Sport" mode. Instantly, the throttle sharpens, the chassis stiffens and the handling becomes knife-edge sharp. On a sweeping curve, I don't need to take my foot off the accelerator. It corners squat.

For BMW, the five-door Mini Cooper was a gamble. Clearly, it's played a winning hand by showing that you can cede ground to the practical and carpool-friendly brigade and still come up with a ride that appeals to the most ardent Mini fan. To which we say, borrowing a leaf from *The Great Gatsby*: "Mini Cooper, you always had our curiosity, but now you have our attention."

BEWARE *of* ODDS



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The New SECOND Homes

Leave your Chattarpur farmhouse to the caretaker – the sexiest new homes aren't where you'd expect



UTTARAKHAND

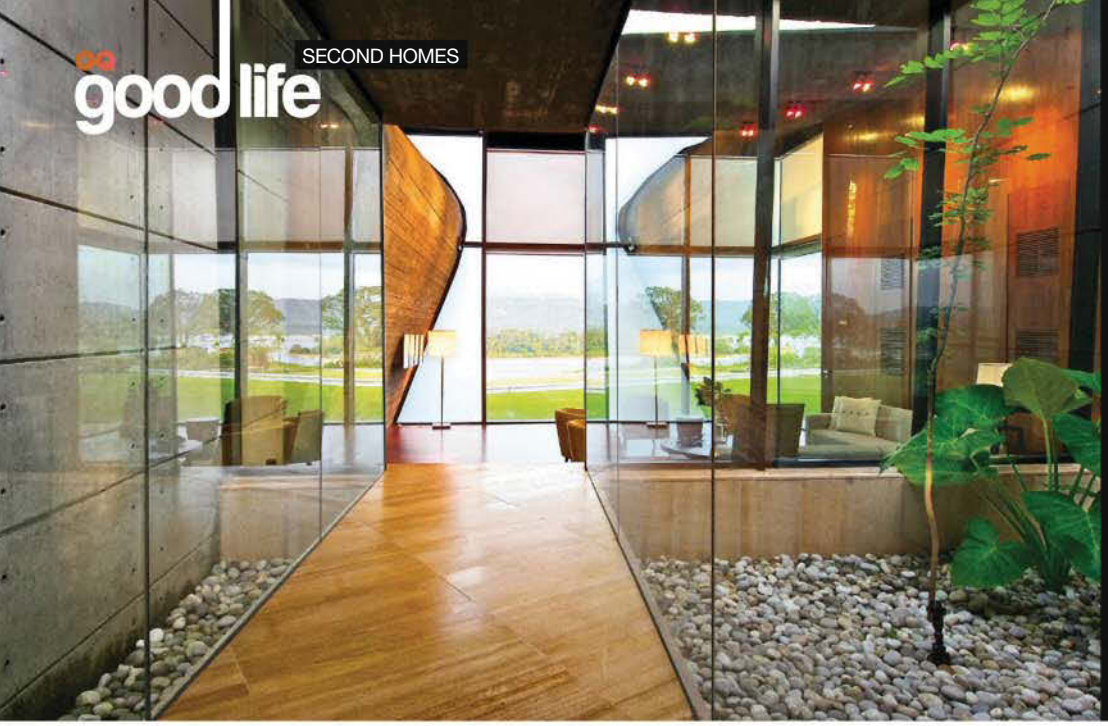
READY HOMES START AT ₹30 LAKH. LAND STARTS FROM ₹3,000/SQM

YOUR NEIGHBOURS WOULD BE:
Prannoy Roy, Victor Banerjee, Tom Alter

USUAL MORNING GREETING:
"Is that a willy warmer you're wearing?"

There's enough to keep you busy in Uttarakhand, particularly if you like the outdoors. From some of the country's best wildlife sanctuaries to adventure sports, the state has it all. Trekking and whitewater rafting in the summer months. Skiing in winter. And of course those long rambling walks in the woods. The state also boasts of being the school capital of India, with some of the country's oldest and most highly rated educational institutions dotting its hills. While this may not mean much to you if you're not planning on sticking the sprogs Doon, it does still have an impact on your life. The schools attract a well-travelled population as faculty and, between those currently teaching and the ones that have hung up their hats and retired there, you'll never be starved for conversation. →

WORDS: ANISH TRIVEDI; IMAGE: RAJIV SAINI AND ASSOCIATES





AVERAGE SATURDAY NIGHT: At the Nainital Boat House Club – if you happen to be a member or know one. If not, there are plenty of bars, particularly in hotels that will be happy to have your custom. But is that really why you went to the mountains?

KEEP IN MIND: Non-Uttarakhand residents can buy up to 250 sqm of land, though this restriction can be eased by forming a housing society or gated community with others, or by applying to the local authorities. You can also buy up to 12.5 acres of agricultural land as an individual, but you still need local permission to build on it.

Try contacting: sargamestate.com

COORG

A HOUSE WITH A COUPLE ACRES OF COFFEE ESTATE PLANTATION STARTS AT ₹1 CRORE



YOUR NEIGHBOURS WOULD BE:
Coffee planters, retired army generals, South Indian corporate kings, Anand Mahindra

USUAL MORNING GREETING:
"Tea? You asked for tea?? Here?!"

Coorg has been called the Scotland of India, quite possibly because it's also known for producing a beverage. As anyone who has drunk enough of Scotland's finest knows, a bracing cup of coffee is essential the morning after. Which is where Coorg comes in. If you're going to plant your roots here, get familiar with the Kodava culture. Fiercely martial, fiercely loyal, you do not want to mess with a people who have a festival dedicated to weapons, and whose harvest festival, a tame affair anywhere else in the country, is kicked off with a gun volley.

AVERAGE SATURDAY NIGHT: Members congregate at the North Coorg Club. The not-so-lucky have a handful of hotels they can hit, including Club Mahindra and Taj Vivanta.

KEEP IN MIND: Seriously consider becoming a gentleman farmer if you're buying a home here – apart from coffee, there's pepper, cardamom and teak to cultivate. It may not pay for your lifestyle, but it should certainly go a long way towards keeping the bar stocked for those chilly nights.

Try contacting: propertiesincoorg.com →



WORDS: ANISH TRIVEDI; IMAGE: RAJIV SAINI AND ASSOCIATES (UTTARAKHAND), COTTABETTA BUNGALOW (COORG), GETTY IMAGES


STILL CREATED
BY THE FAMILY
THAT FIRST
CREATED IT.
Glenfiddich
FAMILY RUN SINCE 1887



GOA

INDEPENDENT VILLAS START AT ₹1 CRORE, AND CAN GO BEYOND ₹7 CRORE

YOUR NEIGHBOURS WOULD BE:
Wendell Rodricks, Tarun Tahiliani, Arjun Khanna, Anish Sood, Vijay Mallya

USUAL MORNING GREETING:
"Oh, god, where's the coffee?"

The new trend in Goa properties is converted homes in villages – Nerul, Moira, Salegaon. As with all real estate, location is everything and you need to decide the lifestyle you want for your weekends there before you make a purchase. Being within walking distance of the beach and bars is great, but it also means your privacy is occasionally impinged upon by that neighbourhood rave on New Year's Eve. With the number of expats living in Goa, you can drum up an eclectic crowd every night of the week. Having a home here is the closest you're going to get to life on the Continent: semi-chic cafes, European accents, Mediterranean cuisine. The downside, of course, is that all your friends will want to borrow your place while you're not there. Generosity is all very well, but you'll soon get tired of changing the sheets every time someone uses the place.

AVERAGE SATURDAY NIGHT: Alcoholic. There are any number of bars, restaurants, nightclubs, casinos, shacks, raves that you can visit. Both eating and drinking out are cheap in Goa, so there's no reason to sit at home any more than you need to.

KEEP IN MIND: Buying property in Goa can be a legal nightmare because of the state's laws, so you must make sure the seller has clear title. While a traditional Portuguese home is charming, you might want to compromise and pick up something newer in one of the many gated communities being developed by a company whose name you recognize.

Try contacting: pmg-goa.com





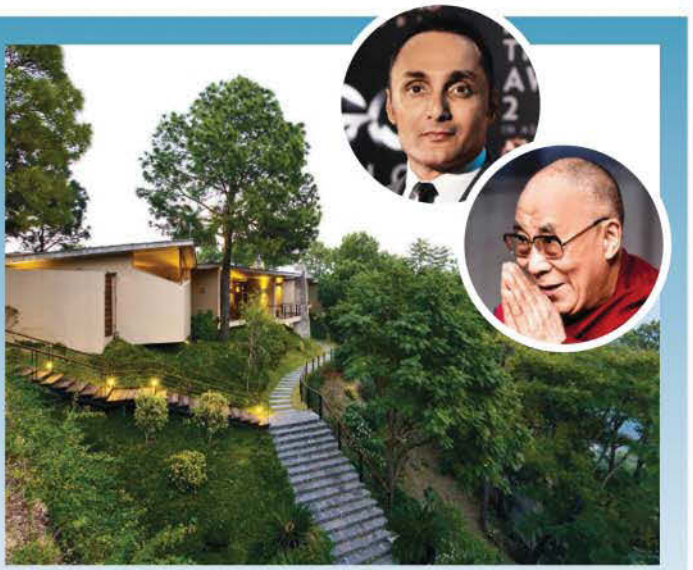
HIMACHAL PRADESH

READY HOMES START FROM ₹2 CRORE. LAND STARTS AT ₹40 LAKH

YOUR NEIGHBOURS WOULD BE:
The Dalai Lama, Rahul Bose, most of Delhi

USUAL MORNING GREETING:
"Nice monkey cap. Homemade, nah?"

If this is going to be your summer getaway, great. You're about a five-hour drive from Delhi, so loading up the SUV for an extended weekend should work. And as long as you're the kind of person who likes walks and views, there's nothing to beat the mountains. But it's the months you won't live there that are going to be the problem. Freezing winters can be hell on your pipes, as can the snow on the roof, and it'll usually take you a week to fix all the things that went wrong in your absence. If you're attracted to the animated landscape you saw in *Frozen* and are going to spend winters in your home, accept that you may be snowed in with all basic utilities on the blink. That said, winter sports are a huge draw, and until you buy that place in Gstaad, you can take your skis for a spin down these slopes.



AVERAGE SATURDAY NIGHT: At the club. Make sure you've packed a jacket and tie, because formal dress is required to enter the bar. Besides that, there's the Hangout Bar at the Kasauli Regency and even a nightclub, the Footloose Disco, in Shimla. If you've picked Dalhousie, you might want to stock up on board games.

KEEP IN MIND: Non-Himachalis are restricted in the kind of property they can buy. There's also a cap on the size of the home you can build once you do get the land. Nothing stops you from buying your second home from a licenced builder, though, so you might want to skip a legal minefield and pick something that has the right paperwork.

Try contacting: theotherhomeproperties.com →

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LONDON

AVERAGE PRICES FOR HOMES RUN FROM ₹2.5 CRORE TO ₹12 CRORE, DEPENDING ON WHERE YOU WANT TO BE. YOU DEFINITELY WON'T SPEND LESS THAN THAT, BUT IF YOU WANT TO OUTDO THE MITTALS, MAKE SURE YOU HAVE ABOUT ₹750 CRORE IN THE KITTY

YOUR NEIGHBOURS WOULD BE:
You really need to ask?

USUAL MORNING GREETING:
"I'm sorry, what was your name again?"

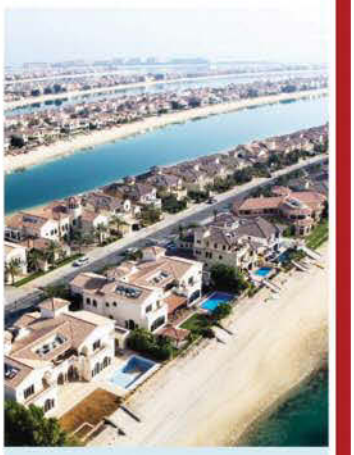
For most Indians, London is as familiar as their own backyard. Unlike the rest of Europe there are no new languages to be learned, there are almost as many Indian restaurants as in any Indian city, there's a cousin or two close by and half the neighbourhood back home is in a service flat down the street for the summer. It's like you never left. You can drink and dine with the same people you meet the other 11 months of the year – although that rather defeats the purpose of buying a second home in another city. Instead, find time to walk through the park, befriend the barkeep at your local pub, spend an afternoon at the National Gallery, an evening at the Royal Court. There's more culture and entertainment to be found in a London square mile than in most other cities in the world.

AVERAGE SATURDAY NIGHT: Nightclubbing, pub crawling, dining out, West End musicals, snooker tournaments on the telly. Take your pick, this town has it all.

KEEP IN MIND: If the idea is to be close to your friends from India, the attractiveness of your property is measured in the distance it takes to get to Mayfair. Think of it this way: If your Tube ticket takes you outside the comfort of Zones 1-2, you shouldn't disclose your address.

Try contacting: foxtons.co.uk





DUBAI

TOWNHOUSES START AT ₹2.5 CRORE. A SIX-BEDROOM VILLA CAN GO UP TO ₹75 CRORE

YOUR NEIGHBOURS WOULD BE:
Victoria & David Beckham, Aishwarya & Abhishek Bachchan, Shah Rukh Khan, maybe even Justin Bieber

USUAL MORNING GREETING:
"Did you see those diamonds on her ears last night?"

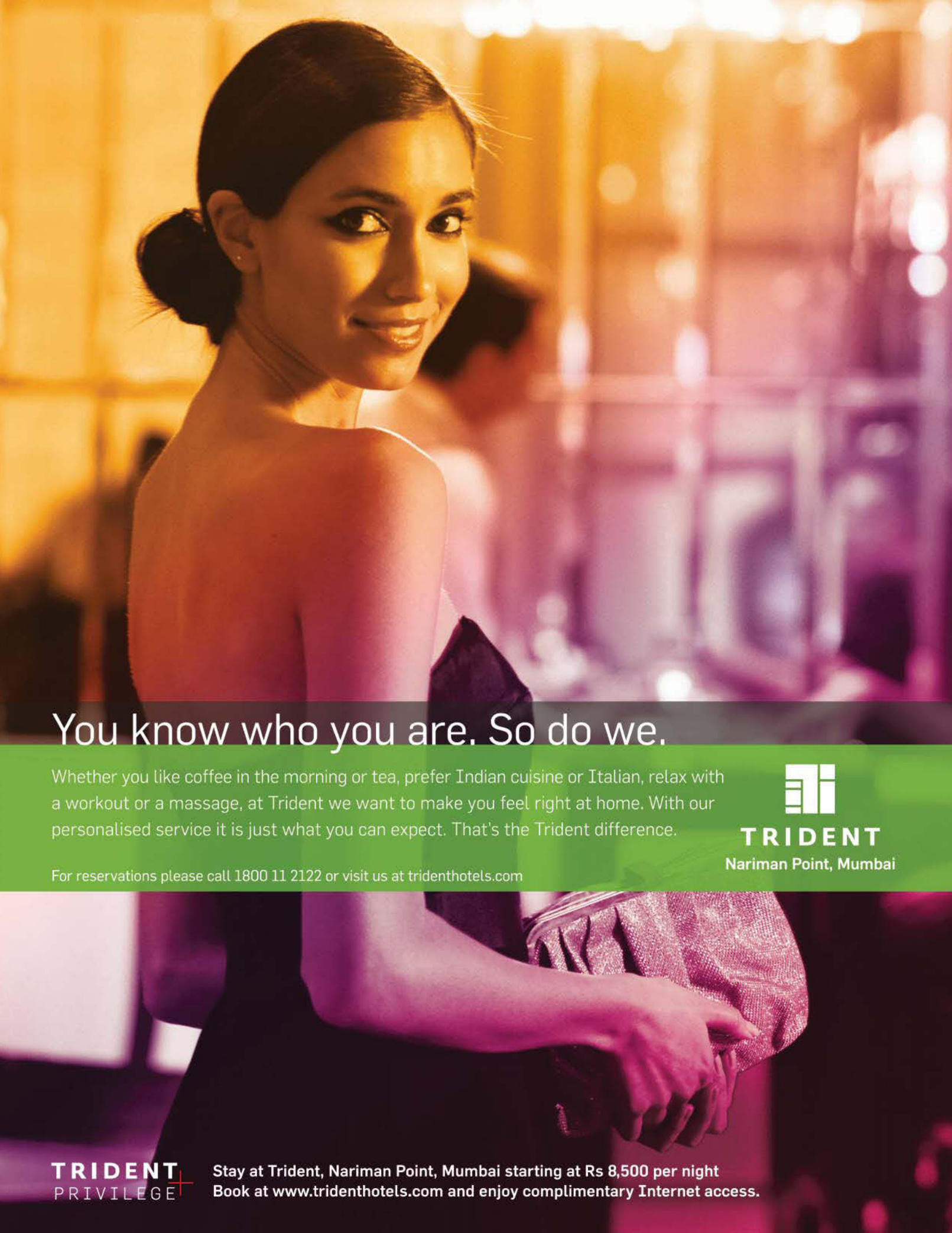
With the number of developers targeting Indian buyers, you're spoiled for choice. Dubai's near enough, taking just a couple of hours to get to from most Indian cities. And the emirate is encouraging investment, particularly in property. While owning a villa in the Palm Jumeirah and having the rich and famous as neighbours may sound appealing, remember that upkeep is expensive. Dubai is not cheap, as anyone who lives there will tell you. You might be better off looking at apartments that are easier to maintain. And no one's going to sneer at you if that apartment is in the Burj Khalifa.

AVERAGE SATURDAY NIGHT: Probably early, as Sunday is a working day. But Friday night, which is the weekend in Dubai, has some of the best nightlife in the world. Do not, repeat, do *not* drink and drive here. "Stoned" has a different legal meaning in Dubai.

KEEP IN MIND: Foreigners can own freehold property in designated areas. Make sure that the property you plan on acquiring is one of these, and not leasehold. Check the credentials of the developer and find out how far along the project has come. Like all countries, buying a home based on just a brochure can be fraught with issues.

Try contacting: dubailuxuryhomes.com

WORDS: ANISH TRIVEDI; IMAGE: RICCARDO LABOUGLE (LONDON), NAKHEEL/PALM JUMEIRAH (DUBAI), GETTY IMAGES


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THE BROOKLYN OF LONDON IS COOLER THAN BROOKLYN

For a decade, East London slowly built its rep as the city's new centre, changing the way Brits regarded the once-neglected side of town. Now, it's all grown up and ready for company, with a proper hotel or three, a slew of new restaurants that put bangers and mash to shame and an art scene that's like a farm league for the Tate. Leave Trafalgar to the pigeons – this is your new London road map

Written by Daniel Riley



1
Beagle: Because drinking is cooler inside a converted railway arch
2
Old Spitalfields Market: Like a mall, but not lame
3 & 4
Happiness Forgets: A local hotspot
5
Beagle's wild sea bass, served whole

DAY 1

DECLARE INDEPENDENCE FROM LONDON PROPER

Show up in any European metropolis and what you really want to do, more than check off a list of tourist-choked sights or luxuriate in some skyline-view room, is find your scene. You want to feel, as quickly as possible, what it's like to inhabit the place – the bars you'd be drinking at, the stores you'd be scoping out, the restaurants where you'd grab a bite at the bar on a Thursday night if you lived there full-time. In London that's impossible, because the city's too damn big. Which makes us grateful for East London, the tight patchwork of endlessly evolving neighbourhoods built by the young and the energetic, where you feel like you're visiting a good friend in a strange place. You get a glimpse of the life you'd be living if you lived in London, because you would be living here.









IMAGE: COURTESY BEAGLE (SEA BASS)





Barrio East has hideaways in every corner



Boxpark marketplace



Shopping's not the only thing to do at Boxpark

Whatever hotel you choose will be in the heart of Hoxton and Shoreditch. Drop your bags, ditch the Tube map (you're not taking any trains all weekend) and head to the market.

This is where locals spend their weekends, and where you should kick off your day-drinking.

Try the beer garden at the sprawling **Old Spitalfields**. Then down a cheap lunch at **Ely's Yard** and stock up on whatever you forgot to pack (shades? Rain slicker? Barbour jacket?) at **Backyard**. Because you're falling in with the crowds, you'll do it all without having to check your iPhone 12 times.

You won't find it hard to sustain the buzz come nightfall. East London is where London goes to drink, at bars like **Callooh Callay** (cocktails), **Happiness Forgets** (more cocktails) and **Barrio East** (ceaseless hen parties). It's all so tightly clustered, you can stumble around for hours without venturing more than a couple of crooked streets away from your hotel bed. →



1

DAY 2

SHOP BEYOND SAVILE ROW

First stop on a Sunday morning is the **Columbia Road Flower Market**, an authentic vestige of old East London – the petal peddlers there have been bartering since before Sir Anthony Hopkins memorized his times tables. Wandering through is exactly the warm-up you'll need as you spill out into an afternoon of shopping.

A few steps beyond the bouquets sit two mother lodes of design-driven gear: **First Captured By**, a matte white storefront with a million Technicolor must-haves. Then **Goodhood Life Store**, where you'll finally hold those European form-and-function objects you've seen on your favourite blogs – stuff like Danish office supplies by Ferm Living, which will make you feel (almost) proud to have a desk job.

Another prime example of East London efficiency is the way it stacks up menswear stores around one central strip: **Commercial Street**. Zigzag your way down the avenue (look right when crossing!) and try to save some pounds for **Albam**, purveyor of our new favourite T-shirts, each woven on a circular loom that leaves the sides seamless. Grab a pint at **The Ten Bells** across the street, then head back to the hotel for that most beautiful of vacation moments: an afternoon nap. →



2



Flowers aren't the only eye candy at Columbia Road Flower Market



A snack at Goodhood Life Store



3

1 An outpost of Hackett, an old-guard English menswear store, in the Old Spitalfields Market

2 & 3 Check into one of the 17 rooms at the Victorian-era Boundary Rooms and Rooftop

4 The Ace Hotel, with a British accent

THREE HOTELS WORTH THE EXCHANGE RATE

The Nonstop Party: The Hoxton

• Opened in 2006, it's a dark, sexy spot that cares as much about the party in its bar as it does the rooms upstairs. Which is: a lot.

The One-Stop Shop: Boundary Rooms and Rooftop

• There are only 17 rooms in this converted warehouse, but it's got three restaurants, a grocer and a bakery, all within its Victorian-era brick walls.

The American Invasion: The Ace Hotel

• Rather than shoehorn in its usual rustic-Americana vibe, the Ace Hotel smartly hired East Enders to deck out its interior spaces. The result? The newest, coolest hotel in a 'hood full of them. Also: custom duvets from A.P.C.



4

PHOTO: ANDREW MEREDITH (ACE HOTEL); IMAGE: COURTESY HACKETT (HACKETT STORE)

THE TRENDS TO MASTER

Look left, look right – and notice bright, bold trends making headway. Prestige The Man Store gets you one step closer to staying at the top of your sartorial game this Spring/Summer season



GO BOLD, OR GO HOME



There is no such thing as "too" bright this season. So go ahead and experiment courageously. Things at Prestige The Man Store are not just colourful, they're dayglo! There are vibrant oranges and reds, upbeat blues and greens and even the one-off eccentric dash of electric pink in chinos, jackets and shirts. For the bashful, start with injecting small doses of colour through your accessories – striking socks, punchy pocket squares and ties that demand attention – before working your way up.

THE BUNDI IS HERE TO STAY



The amount of style mileage this one piece of fashion has gained in the last season is testament to it remaining a hot favourite today. Needless to say, every man should own at least one bundi – although we recommend no less than three. It can instantly take your look from drab to fab, making a simple, sexy statement whether it's day or night, a formal occasion or a casual affair. And it looks damned good in bright hues and light and comfy cotton and linen varieties.

ETHNIC IS THE NEW COOL



Ethnic wear has been loosening up for the past few seasons, and nowhere is it more evident than at Prestige The Man Store. For the contemporary gentleman, there's a fine selection of bright velvet bandgalas and neutral jodhpurs. Single-toned kurtas work great with a contrast-colour bundi on top – we recommend the cobalt blue kurta paired with a sea-green bundi. Handsome much?

ACCESSORY GUY

With bold prints and quirky designs a perennial Spring/Summer trend, there will be no shortage of options for you. From cool pocket squares and elegant ties to statement-making cufflinks and socks in interesting weaves and colours – it's all about the X factor, guys.





1

DAY 3

FIND THE NEXT BANKSY

While the locals trudge off to work in the city centre on weekdays, you've got the art scene of East London to yourself. Hit up contemporary galleries like the **Chisenhale**, just south of Victoria Park, and follow the Regent's Canal west to any of the galleries – **Wilkinson, Wayward, Vyner Street** – along its bank. Feeling wealthy? Buy some Caragh Thuring paintings off the walls at Chisenhale and secure bragging rights a decade in advance.

When the gallery-stroll hunger grows too strong to ignore, head to Hackney, where even five years ago the knife-crime rate alone kept the borough cloistered from tourists. You can sense the city's highest voltage in a neighbourhood no one dared venture to a decade back.

There you'll eat at **Mayfields** – a 30-seat dining room that feels like a spruced-up laundromat – and blow the rest of the night at **Oslo**, tucked beneath the overground at the Hackney Central station. Oslo's ground floor boasts the echoing industrial volume of an auto shop tempered by the comforts of a 10-tap beer selection. It's one of the premier music venues in London, hosting shows five nights a week from about-to-break bands you'll be reading about on *Pitchfork* in a year. You'll lose some of your hearing and most of your voice talking to someone cute you met at the bar, like you would any night out.

During your time in East London, you'll keep having these déjà vu moments where you sense that what you're doing is what your alternate-dimension London-living double would be doing, too. Don't be surprised if you find yourself Googling "apartment rentals East London" when you get home.



2



3

1 The Wayward gallery has a cult following of those who love the weird and the wonderful

2 Forget Harrods – SCP East has everything you need

3 Cleverly plated calamari at Spitalfields' Super Tuscan

IMAGE: COURTESY SUPER TUSCAN (CALAMARI)



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JADE BLUE lifestyle SHOPPERS STOP Splash WESTSIDE flipkart JABONG KOOVS MYNTRA snapdeal





And(not)a-man in sight

The Andaman and Nicobar archipelago, one of the most remote spots in the world, has many things to offer: India's only active volcano, on Barren Island; a marine national park where you'll cruise between mangroves and coral reefs; punchy cuisine with Burmese and Thai influences; and even the country's first liveaboard with scuba diving. What it didn't have was a great place to stay – on land. That's now changed with the opening of **Jalakara** this month, a hip, seven-suite boutique hotel run by a posh London couple who know just what other posh couples are looking for. Set in the heart of Havelock Island, its backdrop is a lush virgin rainforest.The pièce de résistance though is a panoramic 16-metre ozone infinity pool boasting spectacular sunset and sea views. All this, just a three-hour flight from Mumbai. *jalakara.info*

GONE WITH THE WIND

You don't need to take your girlfriend to Cappadocia to float past a full moon in a hot-air balloon on a warm evening as you gaze at her hypoxia-induced breathlessness and reach for that ring in your pocket. You can just do it in Goa. After successfully introducing whitewater rafting, the state's tourism board in association with a Delhi-based private company is offering **hot-air ballooning** in the party capital. The tours take you over the Dudhsagar waterfalls and back, and provide a clear view of the beaches. The reasons for visiting never seem to end.
Tours start in April



BUZZ

ALL THAT'S HOT THIS MONTH



Wine country

The next time you decide to dine at any of the **Taj** properties' restaurants, expect to be offered vino from its own private label. In a first for any hotel chain in India, the group has introduced a private range of wines, selected from across the world by its sommeliers and packaged under the Taj label. On offer are a range of four reds and two whites from regions like the Grange in Australia to Tuscany. Our favourite? Swara, a homegrown wine with a faint touch of purple, created in association with Fratelli. *tajhotels.com*





AMERICAN CLASSIC

Ralph Lauren's new **Polo Bar** in New York City is inspired by one of his favourite pastimes: sharing food with friends and family. The designer's third restaurant – the other two are in Chicago and Paris – serves American fare in an elegantly clubby environment, with a brass-top bar, cozy leather banquettes, two roaring fireplaces, private nooks and a main dining room. Dinner is served to even those in collared T-shirts. *ralphlauren.com*

WORDS: PUNCH HUTTON (POLO BAR), MEGHA SHAH; IMAGE: GETTY IMAGES


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THE GENTLEMEN'S CLUB

It's not often GQ's Gentlemen's Club only needs one question to fuel the entire conversation, but in Smoke House Deli's drawing room in Bandra, with these guys, it's not that surprising. **Shailendra Singh**, founder of one of India's biggest music festivals, finds much in common with singer-songwriter **Mikey McCleary**. Turns out funnyman and MTV alum **Cyrus Sahukar** even has some unreleased studio material with Mikey. They were pretty tight-lipped about its danceability, but if it grooves, restaurateur extraordinaire **Nico Goghavala** might consider blasting it at his Kala Ghoda hotspot, Nico Bombay, where Friday nights have been anything but sleepy lately



ON McCLEARY:
BLAZER, TROUSERS;
BOTH BY **GUCCI**
ON GOGHAVALA:
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MIKEY McCLEARY

"If I had a time machine with what I know now? I would buy Pali Hill for 15 rupees and then sit back and do nothing"



If you had a time machine and you could go to one time period in the past, which one would it be?

GOGHAVALA: The Twenties, I suppose, or maybe the late 1800s, that would be fun. I think life in general was good. Okay, maybe not the disease and stuff, but…
SAHUKAR: Yeah, that's true.
SINGH: Casual sex was serious then.

Nothing casual about it.

GOGHAVALA: Yeah, exactly.
[Laughter]
SAHUKAR: But you need to tell us more. Like, do we have the knowledge we have today, and then we go back? Do we have any skill set?

Is it going to affect your choice?

SAHUKAR: Of course! My god! If I had a time machine with the knowledge I have now I would buy Pali Hill for 15 rupees and then sit back and do nothing.
McCLEARY: I'm gonna compartmentalize this a bit. From my point of view as a musician I'd want to go back to the Sixties and write a lot of songs that, now that they've been written, no one else can write.

Is it a matter of you feeling that originality still existed back then?

McCLEARY: It still does. It's just not so simplistic anymore. You know, with the eight notes in the scale, the permutations and combinations are limitless, but it's starting to get harder to find the original combinations of those notes. I'm with Nico from the point of view of fashion in the Twenties and Thirties, though.
SAHUKAR: I'm curious to know, Mikey, in the Sixties, what kind of musician would you have been?
McCLEARY: I would have probably been into Bob Dylan, poetry, bad voice, progressive styles. You know the Mamas & the Papas? All that sort of stuff I love. Even the Carpenters. They're a little bit soggy, but I like that.
SAHUKAR: Would you go back in time and kill the lead singer of Air Supply?
[Laughter]
McCLEARY: I'm not looking at this from the I-know-what-the-future-holds angle, though.



CYRUS SAHUKAR

LOCATION: THE DRAWING ROOM, SMOKE HOUSE DELI, BANDRA; STYLIST: VASUNDHARA SHARMA; PRODUCTION: PALLAVI KUMAR

SATORIAL SIGNATURES

Whether it's an impeccably tailored suit or footwear that's embossed with your initials, Gucci offers state-of-the-art bespoke services to give you the very best in luxury fashion

It's one thing to select a suit and a pair of shoes that are on display in a luxury boutique, and quite another to have a leading fashion label cater to all your style requirements. Gucci's Made-to-Measure and Made-to-Order services are for the gentleman who appreciates perfection in style.

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GUCCI

Shailendra, what do you think?

SINGH: I would like to go back to 1946-47. To be a part of the conflict of pre-Independence. As someone in the business of communication, it's quite interesting to me to think that Mahatma Gandhi could mobilize nine million people for a walk with no WhatsApp, BBM, Facebook, no mobile. That pre-Independence era was very raw and pure. So it was just a free-flowing spirit and that's possibly why we are, today, a free nation.
GOGHAVALA: We're a very old civilization, but we are a very young country.
SAHUKAR: Our grandparents are full of Partition stories, and 60 years is such a short time. If you're an Indian and you've grown up in our country then it's your home conversation.
SINGH: I didn't even know, but my wife is from Pakistan.
GOGHAVALA: Seriously?
SINGH: I just found out recently over dinner *[Laughs]* I said, "What the fuck!"
[Laughter]
SINGH: She is Sindhi or whatever, you know? She's from Lahore, originally. I mean, nothing's wrong with that but it's just, like, kind of sudden news.
SAHUKAR: One day you'll be supporting Pakistan in the cricket matches.
SINGH: Balls!
[Laughter]
SINGH: I'm sure in those days independence is all everyone talked about 24 hours a day. But other than that, I'd also go to the Sixties for sure, there were so many people I adored, looked up to, would love to know.

And then you could have your midlife crisis in the excessive Eighties.

SINGH: Exactly. Even in India, there were stories you'd hear about everybody partying and having fun and jumping around.



SUNGLASSES, WALLETS, WATCH; ALL BY **GUCCI**



NICO GOGHAVALA
POCKET SQUARE BY **GUCCI**



GOGHAVALA: These days there's a stigma attached to you when you start drinking in the morning, but in those days there wasn't.
SAHUKAR: And in the late 1800s no one knew any better.
[Laughter]
SINGH: Yeah, times change. But the funny thing is none of us considered the present day, right? Like, nobody seems to be too happy about being around in our own time.
SAHUKAR: The grass being greener and all that.

And if you ask somebody in the Sixties if they'd like to be transported to 2015?

GOGHAVALA: They're gonna be super excited, yeah.

Just show someone an iPhone.

McCLEARY: That'd be enough.
[Laughter]
SAHUKAR: This generation, now that we have the gift of the internet, it also comes with its own psychosis. You've got thousands and millions of options and it can be a bit of a blow to the ego, the ego that wants to do original things, because if you google anything, it's been done. So the race has become about being faster than the guy behind you, not necessarily being the guy who wins the race, and that's why everyone is running. But the internet has also made the world a more egalitarian space, and in that way I feel it's a great opportunity. But it comes with its lunacy, man, you can go cuckoo bananas.
SINGH: I said something to some kids I met recently. I said, you know, there's more power in deeds than tweets. You don't fucking sit at home and say, oh, you know, support the candle march, and all that bullshit. I mean, three million united for the death

LOCATION: THE DRAWING ROOM, SMOKE HOUSE DELI, BANDRA; STYLIST: VASUNDHARA SHARMA; PRODUCTION: PALLAVI KUMAR

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ON McCLEARY:
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ON GOGHAVALA: POCKET SQUARE BY **GUCCI**

of 12 people in Paris. The fucking same day 2,000 people died in Nigeria and nobody held a torch!
SAHUKAR: Absolutely.
SINGH: You'll have some people who love this medium and blossom, and some who'll feel completely out of place and pine for a simple life.

What about you, Mikey? You're working as a musician in a post-record label music industry, one that functions completely differently than when we were young and going to record stores. Do you wrestle with this, or have you got the whole online thing figured out?

McCLEARY: The internet has been a big game-changer. Now major labels are unnecessary. There used to be an exclusive number of artists who were really promoted and they were the big names, but now anyone can be an artist and I think that's a great thing in itself, but there's a lot more content coming out and so the market is a lot more flooded.
GOGHAVALA: Totally.
McCLEARY: And coming back to originality, obviously the more art that is created the harder it becomes to be original, which is why you could be original in the Sixties by writing some nice lyrics and a nice melody and playing that on the guitar. Now, you have to create some new sub form of EDM or…
SAHUKAR: Music was more real earlier.
McCLEARY: I don't think it was necessarily more real, but yes, it was more organic because it was simpler. You got the sound and you can just play it, you know? It didn't require any computer trickery, but whether it's more real, I don't know.
SINGH: What I don't understand, even after eight years of promoting electronic dance music, is how they break things into 35 different genres. You don't get all these sub-genres within rock, or acoustic music. Look, our Sunburn festival in Goa lost money in 2007, pretty badly, but I call India the United States of India: You take an hour-long flight and there's a different language, different cuisine, different social habits. So this music with no lyrics, it's pure energy, and that travels well.
McCLEARY: That's a good point, actually.
SAHUKAR: It's a great point.
[Laughter]
McCLEARY: Musicians obviously don't become musicians because it's a great career choice. There have been times when I've thought, "I wish I had taken a normal day-job kind of route…"

Why couldn't I have been passionate about brain surgery, you know?

GOGHAVALA: Will Cyrus trust you to cut open his head?
SAHUKAR: There's nothing left in my head. It's like salad in there.
[Laughter]

Ok. Next question.

SAHUKAR: Oh shit! We've only done one question so far?

SHAILENDRA SINGH



"There's nothing left in my head. It's like salad in there"

THE GENTLEMEN'S CLUB

LOCATION: THE DRAWING ROOM, SMOKE HOUSE DELI, BANDRA; STYLIST: VASUNDHARA SHARMA; PRODUCTION: PALLAVI KUMAR

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Serendipity

THE STORIES OF MODELS BEING DISCOVERED BY SCOUTS ARE MANY, BUT MOST DON'T COME OUT SOUNDING LIKE THE STORY OF **ERIKA PACKARD**



PHOTOGRAPHED BY
JATIN KAMPANI

STYLED BY
TANYA VOHRA

WRITTEN BY
DAVE BESSELING

LACE ROBE BY **KNICKERS FOREVER**. BRA, KNICKERS; BOTH BY **FIFI CHACHNIL**



LACE AND EMBELLISHED LINGERIE BY **AGENT PROVOCATEUR SOIRÉE**



BRA, KNICKERS; BOTH BY
LA PERLA. HEELS BY
CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN



A teenage girl is walking through a Bandra vegetable market with her mother. She is spotted by a talent scout and asked if she has ever thought about being a model. It's a scenario a lot of teenage girls probably play out a few times a night during REM sleep. In this case, however, the girl hesitates. She wants to study psychology. Turns out it's the girl's mother who convinces her. She goes to meet the agent. A decade later, the girl is represented by four agencies around the world, and major life dramas include nearly missing flights due to the magnitude of her shopping sprees, and whether to spend the night at home in Mumbai or Goa. She's got the luck of the Irish. No, really. Her dad was half Irish. Before he passed away, he was Bollywood's go-to whiteboy baddie. He used to star in movies with notorious localboy baddie Shakti Kapoor, whose son, Siddanth, is Erika's longtime beau. You can't make this up. This is definitely the stuff of REM sleep.



LACE AND EMBELLISHED LINGERIE BY **AGENT PROVOCATEUR SOIRÉE**. HEELS BY **CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN**



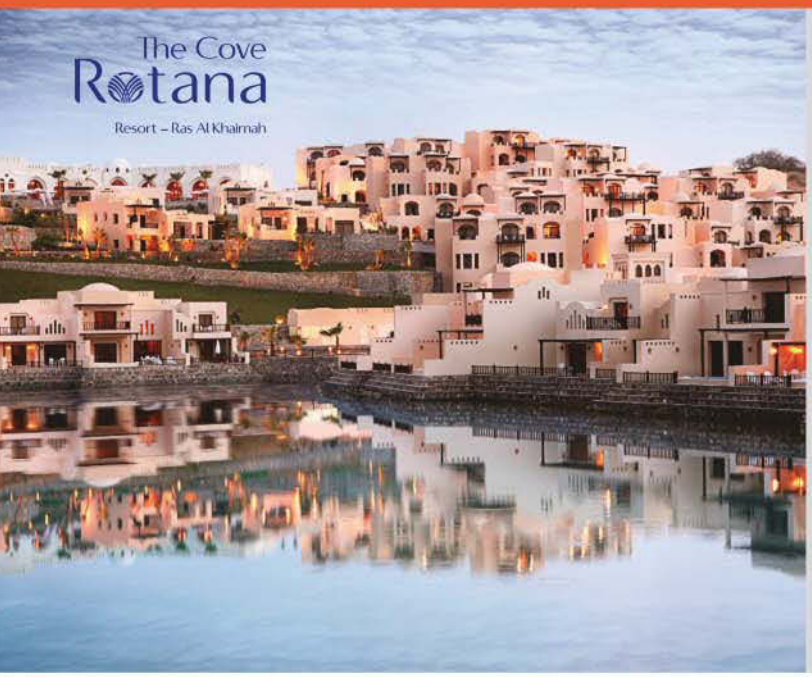
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TALK

EDITED BY **SHIKHA SETHI**

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IRON CHEF

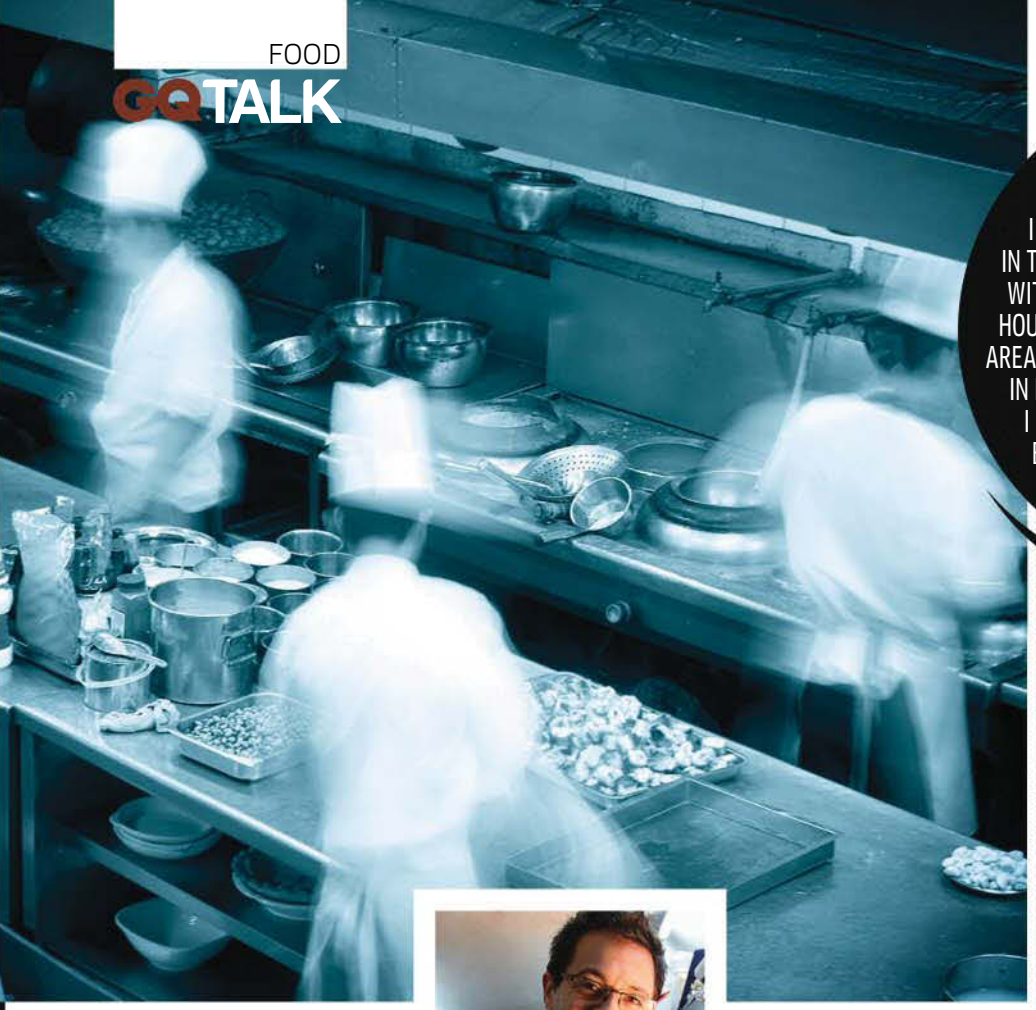
BY **ALEX SANCHEZ**

WANT TO TEST A MAN'S CHARACTER? THROW HIM INTO THE KITCHEN OF A MICHELIN-STAR RESTAURANT AND SEE IF HE'LL SURVIVE

Becoming a chef wasn't the original plan; becoming a microbiologist was. But after a year of hectic partying and bad grades in college, I called it quits and took up an unpaid job working in the basement of a busy restaurant – the Thirsty Bear Brewing Company in San Francisco – rolling out hundreds and hundreds of meatballs every day. Luckily for me, I realized that cooking was something I really enjoyed – and something I was good at. And unlike school, each skill I learned here could be immediately put to use. But it wasn't only the work that kept me going back. I was completely captivated by the excitement of the kitchen.

I was young and impressionable back then. In the industry, we call that green. All around me, skilled veterans moved effortlessly around the kitchen, while I was slow and clumsy. No one paid much attention to me at first, but given that it was hard enough adjusting to the work, making friends was the least of my concerns. When I finally showed them I could hold my own, they began to test me. →

IMAGE: GETTY IMAGES





EACH KITCHEN HAS ITS OWN WAY OF BREAKING IN NEWBIES AND I WAS NO EXCEPTION. THEY'D LOCK ME IN THE REFRIGERATOR AND LEAVE ME THERE WITH THE LIGHTS OFF FOR WHAT FELT LIKE HOURS. IF I WAS ALONE IN THE DRY STORAGE AREA, IT WAS LIKELY I'D BE WRAPPED ENTIRELY IN PLASTIC WITH NO ONE TO CUT ME FREE. I WAS NICKNAMED "CUÑADO", MEANING BROTHER-IN-LAW, TO INSINUATE THAT EVERYONE WAS SHACKING UP WITH MY SISTER

Each kitchen has its own way of breaking in newbies and I was no exception. They'd lock me in the refrigerator and leave me in there with the lights off for what felt like hours. If I was alone in the dry storage area, it was likely I'd be wrapped entirely in plastic with no one to cut me free. It wasn't unusual to reach down into my Lowboy, only to feel droplets of burning oil on the exposed part of my back. I'd turn around to see Dani or Miguel laughing uncontrollably. I was nicknamed "cuñado", meaning brother-in-law, to insinuate that everyone was shacking up with my sister. And, of course, I'd be remiss to leave out the ass-grabbing – lots and lots of ass-grabbing. While you might think I'd become resentful, it actually brought me closer to the other cooks. It was my rite of passage.

Felipe was one of the first guys I worked with. I always thought he looked like a pirate: a skinny guy with a shrill voice, a goatee and a red bandana. He was a mentor to me during my first few months on the job. I was eager to learn, and I think he liked that he could pawn his work off on me. While I worked beside him, he'd tell me about his sexual adventures and, naturally, his wide range of marital issues. As a course of habit he'd make this strange popping sound with his lips, and when I finally asked him about it he said, "You know! When you take a chicken…" – he clutched an imaginary chicken with his hands, bringing it to his crotch – "… And it goes POP!" I wish I hadn't asked. Sometimes, I'd turn a corner and see him dry humping another cook against the wall. It wasn't sexual. It was just Felipe.

While I certainly enjoyed the playful environment of my first job, I wanted to cut my teeth with the best. My search for a bigger challenge eventually led me to an old-school French restaurant with a Michelin star. La Folie was a San Francisco institution and, unlike other restaurants, Chef worked the line with us every night. Our kitchen wasn't like those fancy ones you see on *MasterChef*. It was old and cramped. My station was actually called the "corner station" because I was wedged into the corner, so close to the stovetop that my uniform would burn if I wasn't careful. No matter how dysfunctional our kitchen was, Chef never accepted anything less than perfection. I have memories of literally dodging my mistakes as they were thrown at my head – barbecue squab and the plate it sat on immediately come to mind. He would be seething with anger one minute and laughing with his thick French accent the next.

As I became better at what I did, my desire to understand the principles behind truly great cooking intensified. My quest for a new mentor landed me at the foothills of the Santa Cruz Mountains in California, at a near-legendary Michelin two-star restaurant called Manresa. Our team was small and close-knit. We worked with high-quality produce, directly from our own farm. Whereas the other chefs I'd worked for were strict taskmasters, Chef here was more like a spiritual leader. He preached the gospel of good food and we were his devoted followers. I worked harder there than I ever had in my life, but the work fed my soul. During prep, we'd have impassioned discussions about food culture – cooking techniques, trends, the restaurant scene in different cities – and great chefs around the world. No yelling, no pranks, just amazing food and the camaraderie surrounding it.

Throughout my career I've found myself in all sorts of kitchens – from the ass-slapping cowboy types to the cut-throat do-or-die ones. Each has played a key role in my development as a cook and helped shape me as a person. Now, as the chef of my own kitchen at The Table in Mumbai, I think a lot about the environment I want to create for my cooks, many of whom are green as grass. I want mine to be fun and playful, but not without focus; serious and disciplined, but not without kindness. Above all, I want my kitchen to be a place of constant inspiration, because without that, there is no great food.

Alex Sanchez is the Chef at The Table, Mumbai



IMAGE: SHUTTERSTOCK (KNIFE BLOCK), GETTY IMAGES (KITCHEN)

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SLAP-GATE

BY **ANISH TRIVEDI**

OR HOW NOT TO BE AN INSUFFERABLE GIT



There's one in every crowd. The pompous sort who can't stop doling out advice on every topic under the sun, moon and stars. In my life, there's the man who tells me what's wrong with my barbecue (gas, not charcoal), cheesecake (baked, not frozen), driver (too slow), children (too surly), dogs (too friendly), business (too broke), wine (too cheap) and wife (too married). Not all at the same time, I grant you. But with a certain regularity that ensures there's a steady stream of complaints with a host of solutions being offered alongside. Don't get me wrong. I am all in favour of asking for advice, and even offering it. It's the unsolicited sort with which I have a problem.

I also have a series of subjects on which you never, ever, comment. No matter how much you feel the need. You never tell someone how to bring up their children, not even if the little bastards are smearing jam tarts into the priceless rug your great-grandmother brought back from Persia. Much as you'd like to tell their mother that military school would be the right place to park them, you just suck it up and suffer in silence.

And dogs. Mine are perfectly well-behaved, have never bitten a soul and, apart from a tendency to vacuum up any food within reach, are delightful company. So you do not walk into my house and ask why the dogs are on the couch. They are on the couch because it is their bloody house, and their bloody couch. If you don't want dog hair on your pants, feel free to stand.

But if you're going to offer advice regardless, you need to first be sure that you know what you're talking about. So it might help to actually work out a list of things on which you could be considered an authority. No one's going to take you seriously on single malt if you're a teetotaller. Or worse, drink only rum and coke. But if, over time, people around you learn to acknowledge that you do know what you're talking about, like a doctor who's asked to offer free consultations at a party, you'll be the person to whom people turn. There is a certain satisfaction in having someone say "let's ask him", and have the room fall silent while you ponder your answer.

ADVICE TO WOMEN, THOUGH? JUST DON'T. FOR STARTERS, NO GENTLEMAN WOULD EVER PRESUME TO TELL A LADY HOW TO DRESS. NO MATTER WHAT SHE WEARS, SHE IS PERFECT. AND IF YOU HAVEN'T LEARNED TO SAY THAT CONVINCINGLY AFTER ALL THESE YEARS, IT'S PROBABLY WHY YOU HAVEN'T HAD A LASTING RELATIONSHIP AND ARE STILL LIVING WITH YOUR MOTHER

Whatever you do, don't waffle. Have an opinion. Someone calls you and asks what you think of bow ties, you should be ready to point out that unless the dress code calls for a dinner jacket or the person enquiring is a middle-aged English professor in Minnesota, the answer is a clear and unqualified no.

The downside to being the go-to guy for topics like this of course is that you soon get inundated with silly requests. Like the time I had someone send me a series of messages about the price of every possible variant of wine in Mumbai's stores. I answered the first few politely. Then finally had to be rude and suggest the asker might be better served walking into a liquor store than wasting my time with text after text.

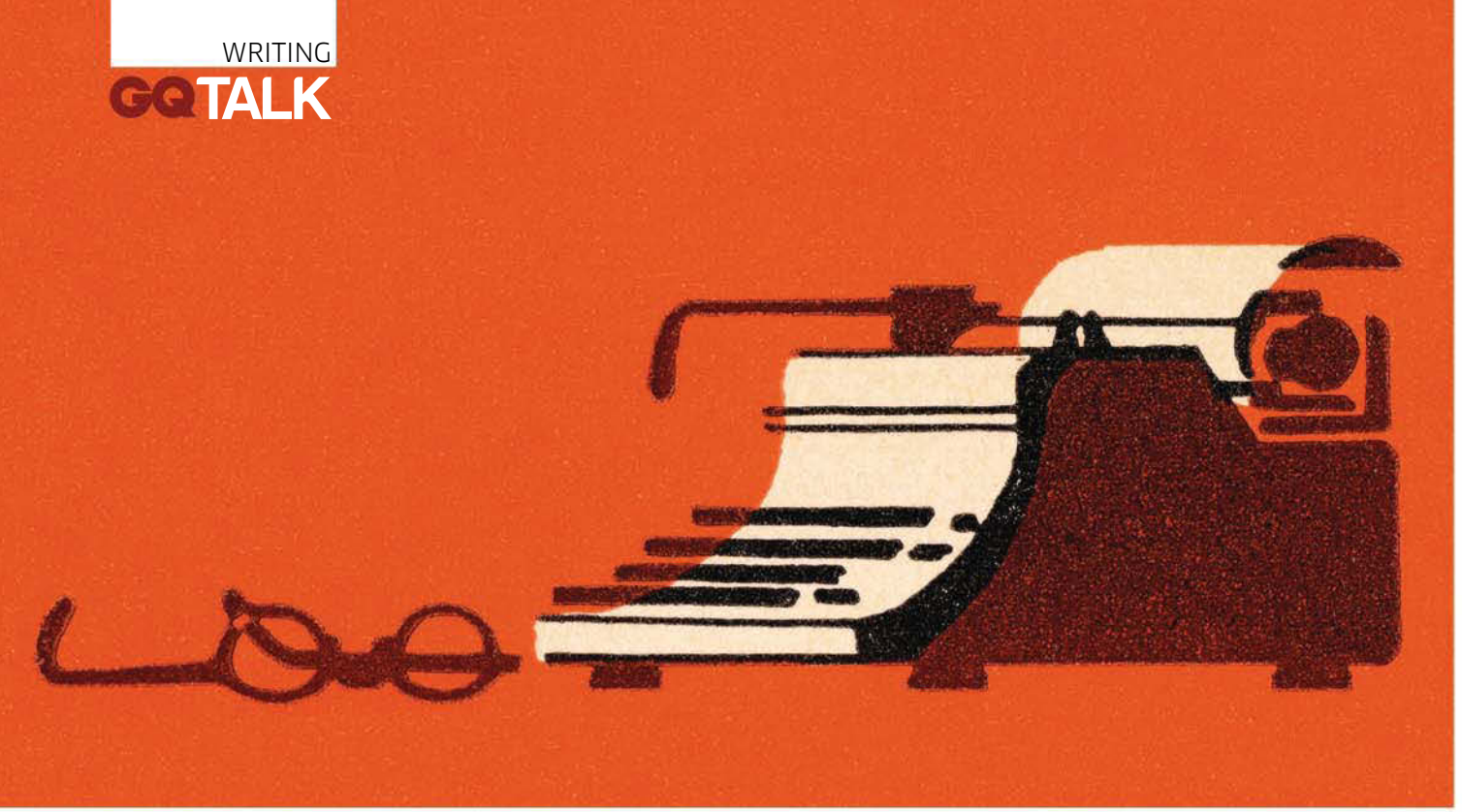
Let's face it. In an age when the answer to any question is just a search on a smartphone away, it shouldn't be hard to offer the right advice. If you're not in the presence of the person, it's a simple matter of Googling what you need to say. This works for all topics ranging from the capital of Slovenia to the right speakers to buy for a high-end home theatre.

Advice to women, though? Just don't. For starters, no gentleman would ever presume to tell a lady how to dress. No matter what she wears, she is perfect. And if you haven't learned to say that convincingly after all these years, it's probably why you haven't had a lasting relationship and are still living with your mother. Only another woman can give her the validation she seeks, whether it's on the length of her hair or her dress. She doesn't really want your opinion. She's just making you feel like you matter. But here lies the rub. You don't. And that, alas, is one of those things you don't discover on Google.

Anish Trivedi is the author of Call Me Dan. *Follow him @anish_trivedi*

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000 THE WORD SHED

WHERE IMAGINATION COMES TO LIFE

BY **COLUM McCANN**

Every afternoon, when my father arrived home from his job as the features editor at a newspaper in Dublin, he disappeared into his writing shed. To get there, you had to squeeze your way past the coal bin, the lawnmower, cans of petrol and paint, ancient bicycle parts. The shed always smelled damp inside, as if the rain rose up out of the carpet. The bookshelves sagged. The low-slung roof had a murky skylight with a hat of grey Irish cloud.

From the house, I could hear the tattoo of two-fingered typing. The ping of the bell. The slam of the carriage return. It all sounded like a faint form of applause. My father's books – *The World Of Sean O'Casey*, *The Wit Of Oscar Wilde*, *All The World's Roses*, *The Fighting Irish* – sat on the coffee table in what we called the D & D room: reserved for the dead and the dignified. The books didn't mean much to me. I wanted to be what every other boy wanted to be: a professional soccer player.

In his youth, my father had been a semi-professional goalkeeper. Nothing very glamorous. He played second-string for Charlton Athletic, in London, and got paid ten shillings and sixpence a week. What he remembered most vividly was having to polish the boots of the first team players, and sweeping the rat shit out of the canteen in the morning. He never played for the first team, but he didn't see this as a failure so much as an adventure in limitations. He came back to Dublin, had a family and began to write.

One winter evening, when I was nine years old, he came into my bedroom, carrying under his arm a sheaf of papers, some of them two or three feet long. (Like Kerouac, he used large rolls of industrial paper in his Olivetti.) It was a carbon copy of what he had been writing for the previous few weeks: a book for kids titled *Goals For Glory*.

"Read it for me, will you? Tell me if it's awful or not."

I read it by flashlight. Georgie Goode was a sullen Gypsy boy, 15 years old, with long black hair. He travelled around the fens of England in a battered caravan, with a father who was sometimes there, sometimes absent. Georgie had no money for soccer boots, so he slipped around in the muck in his plimsolls. It was the stuff of children's myth – Georgie had an eye for the back of the net and a left foot like chain lightning – but it all seemed plausible.

Years later, I would read James Joyce and mull over the idea that literature could "re-create life out of life", but back then what stunned me was that another boy could emerge from my father's ramshackle shed, as real to me as the dirt that caked on my own soccer boots. This was new territory: the imagined coming to life. My father's typewriter sounded different to me now. More and more, I disappeared into books.

When *Goals For Glory* was published, the following year, I took the hardcover to school. My teacher, Mr Kells, read a chapter aloud every Friday afternoon, that time of the school week when the world promises escape. We sat in our prefab classroom and waited for him to crack the spine.

In the last chapter, Georgie's team had to beat the rival team, Dale Rovers. Georgie had been given a new pair of soccer boots. The championship was at stake. I knew the ending already, but my classmates didn't. They were latched to their desks. Of course, Georgie started the game off badly, and of course he got rid of his new boots, and of course his father arrived late to cheer him on, and of course doom loomed, as doom so often does in a good story.

I will never forget Christopher Howlett, my red-headed deskmate, jumping around like a prayer in an air raid as Mr Kells reached the final page. Georgie scored the winning goal. The classroom erupted. The kid from my father's shed – that tangle of hair that had somehow sprung up from behind a typewriter ribbon – was carried with us outside the school gates, down Mart Lane, through the swamp and into the field at the back of Dunnes Stores, where, with a soggy leather ball at our feet, we all became Georgie, at least for a minute or two.

Such euphoria seldom lasts, but the nostalgia for it remains. My world had changed enough for me to know that I would try to write a character into it one day – not a Georgie, necessarily, but perhaps a father, or a son.

A few years on, when I was a teenager, my father sat me in the shed and recited, from memory, Philip Larkin's "This Be The Verse": "They fuck you up, your mum and dad./They may not mean to, but they do". Fair enough, and I knew what he was trying to say, but I also knew that sometimes – just sometimes – the father you get is the father you want.

Colum McCann is a National Book Award-winning author. This article first appeared in The New Yorker

IMAGE: GETTY IMAGES

000
THE WILD ONE

BY **SANJAY MANJREKAR**

INDIA'S BEST MODERN ONE-DAY CAPTAIN IS AN ENIGMA WRAPPED IN A MYSTERY



I remember Ravi Shastri telling me about a new talent who was rising through the ranks. "He has long hair, is a wicketkeeper and gives the ball a bit of a thump," Ravi said excitedly. We were talking about Mahendra Singh Dhoni.

A few months later we saw him in a match against Pakistan. He got 148 at Vizag – and announced his arrival on the international stage.

I noted the power in his shots and that when he hit sixes, he hit the ball straight. That told me he would become a dangerous limited-overs batsman.

When you hit straight sixes (remember his World Cup-winning six?), you don't take big risks to get quick runs, and that basically makes you a consistent One-Day batsman. He lived up to my expectation. Like Tendulkar, Dhoni's failures as a batsman in One-Day cricket were rare.

That was easy to predict, but who could have foreseen that only a few years later he would become the best modern-day Indian captain? Who saw that coming? No one.

Sandip Patil likes to tell the story of when he was the coach of a young Indian side. Dhoni, who was then just a player on the team, walked up to him the evening before a game and told him, matter-of-factly, that it would be a good idea to promote him up the order. If he batted earlier on, he said, he would be able to contribute better, and the team would benefit. Patil did as Dhoni suggested – and the batsman delivered.

That was, perhaps, an early sign that not only was this man sure of his abilities, but he was also a potentially exceptional captain.

★

IN CONTRAST TO SOURAV GANGULY, IF YOU SAW A CLOSE-UP OF DHONI DURING A MATCH, YOU WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO TELL IF HIS TEAM WAS WINNING OR LOSING. HE WAS THE ULTIMATE "COOL GUY" OF THE CRICKET WORLD, JUST LIKE CLINT EASTWOOD WAS IN AMERICAN WILD WEST MOVIES

Dhoni the captain led the Indian team to victory in South Africa in the inaugural World T20 in 2007. Remember that famous win? That last over from Joginder Sharma?

Before him, India had seen Sourav Ganguly as a long-standing captain. Ganguly was a natural leader on the field. When India played well, you knew he was obviously happy, but when things went wrong, the changing mood of the captain was also all too visible.

In contrast, if you saw an extreme close-up of Dhoni during a match, you wouldn't be able to tell if his team was winning or losing. He was the ultimate "cool guy" of the cricket world, just like Clint Eastwood was in American Wild West movies. That instantly made me a Dhoni fan.

When India won, Dhoni, even if he had played a central role, was always somewhere on the sidelines – in both the group photographs and the celebrations that followed.

In a nation where leaders want to show they are leaders, and use every possible platform to do so, the seat in the centre of the group is sacrosanct.

Here, Dhoni was like a Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, the qawwali maestro from Pakistan, who for some reason never sat in the centre while giving his mesmerizing performances.

I find it amazing that a small-town boy from Ranchi could have such a high degree of self-confidence. Dhoni almost possessed an air of royalty about him.

When he became India's captain, he was surrounded by the likes of Tendulkar, Dravid, Laxman and Sehwag – very much the senior stalwarts of Indian cricket – but even during that phase, we always knew who the leader on the field was. It was MSD.

I have been reliably told by one of these stalwarts that not once did Dhoni disrespect or demean any of the senior players just because he was captain, and a successful one at that. Any lesser person may have may have faltered on this front – because of his own insecurity or inadequacy – but Dhoni maintained this delicate balance quite easily. He was a bit like Imran Khan, someone who could hold his own even on a world platform.

Sunil Gavaskar once said that Dhoni did not seek Indian cricket, Indian cricket sought him. Gavaskar is completely right. Dhoni often gives me the impression that he is not quite aware of Indian cricket history and how the game was played before his time; that cricket to him was the next ball. His ability to stay in the moment and keep it simple is his rare gift.

He once passed me on the field, as he was heading for a press conference, after India had been knocked out of the 2010 World T20 tournament in the West Indies. I observed him closely to see if there were any signs of sadness, anger or anxiety stemming from that loss. But no, there was nothing of the kind. To me, he looked like a regular guy just going for a morning walk.

He always talked about going through a process and not worrying about the result. I don't think he said it for the heck of it, as one might in post-match interviews. He actually believed it.

Dhoni did not care about losing and that is why he won so much – because he was never afraid of taking all those risks as India captain.

In this World Cup, Dhoni is half the strength of the Indian team. Not only is he a key batsman for India and the best finisher this game has ever seen, he is also a master at handling tension, a crucial skill in any World Cup. And that makes him as captain simply indispensable.

Sanjay Manjrekar is a former international cricketer and sports commentator

CRANK UP THE COLOUR

Photographed by **TARUN VISHWA** Styled by **VIJENDRA BHARDWAJ** Written by **SHIVANGI LOLAYEKAR**



But not just any colour. These are the 12 unexpected shades – yes, we're talking lavender, pink and scarlet – to add to your arsenal now

TEAL

The kinda blue-green that looks natural and organic, even when it's fresh off the rack. Think of it as the modern guy's khaki – it's just as versatile, and lends bounce to a crisp white summer suit.

SUIT BY **ETRO**. SHIRT, POCKET SQUARE; BOTH BY **HUGO BOSS**. TIE BY **RICHARD JAMES**. SHOES BY **CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN**



PERSIAN GREEN

If you're easing into non-traditional suit colours, play it safe with navy. But when you're comfortable, let it rip with some sumptuous Persian green. In 1965, Eddie Albert nailed it in *Green Acres*. In 2015, Gucci's given it a nautical spin to keep it in the here and now.

SUIT, VEST; BOTH BY **GUCCI**. SHOES BY **TOD'S**



CORAL

In Naples, this colour comes from a reddish-pink coral that's indigenous to the surrounding waters and is said to bring one luck. Everywhere else, it's found under an easy denim suit. No luck needed.

DENIM SUIT, T-SHIRT; BOTH BY **BREAKBOUNCE**. FRAMES BY **GIORGIO ARMANI**. LOAFERS BY **TOD'S**



"Man needs colour to live; it's just as necessary an element as fire and water."

–FERNAND LÉGER

PUMPKIN

When Hermès' menswear designer and bosswoman Véronique Nichanian calls pumpkin summer's biggest shade, it *is* summer's biggest shade. Wear it with statement brogues.

CARDIGAN, PANTS; BOTH BY **HERMÈS**. SHOES BY **CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN**



BABY PINK

Once only acceptable for little girls, the colour's now made for the 21st century gentleman. The only rule? Wear it subtly.

BLAZER BY **ALEXANDER McQUEEN**. SHIRT BY **THOMAS PINK**. TROUSERS BY **ZARA**. TIE BY **HUGO BOSS**. POCKET SQUARE BY **RICHARD JAMES**

PINK

A little bit goes a long way. So stick to a single piece and offset it with neutral colours for a winning combination.

BLAZER BY **ETRO**.
JUMPER BY **CORNELIANI**.
CHINOS BY **ZARA**.
TRAINERS BY **TOD'S**



"Pink it was love at first sight, Pink when I turn out the light, Pink gets me high as a kite, And I think everything is going to be all right, No matter what we do tonight."

–AEROSMITH, "PINK"



PEACH

A muted orange shade that looks like it was made in 1980 and washed out to just the right amount for 2015. Wear it in the form of a sharp double-breasted blazer with light jeans and white trainers.

DOUBLE-BREASTED JACKET BY **BOTTEGA VENETA**. SHIRT BY **RAJESH PRATAP SINGH**. TROUSERS BY **TOM FORD**. POCKET SQUARE BY **RICHARD JAMES**. WATCH BY **HUBLOT**. TRAINERS BY **TOD'S**

"One does a whole painting for one peach and people think just the opposite – that particular peach is but a detail."

–PABLO PICASSO



LAVENDER

It's commonly known for its therapeutic properties and sweet scent. This season, it's also the colour to pair with your jeans for some visual pop.

SHIRT BY **GIORGIO ARMANI**. T-SHIRT BY **JOHN VARVATOS**. JEANS BY **CALVIN KLEIN JEANS**. HAT BY **PAUL SMITH**. BELT BY **TOM FORD**. WATCH BY **HUBLOT**



BLEU DE TRAVAIL

"Work blue" was once the go-to colour for Parisian men, office-goers to factory workers. Now the colour's bleeding globally and there's no better way than to wear it with a statement suit and hit a party.

SUIT BY **VIVIENNE WESTWOOD**. SHIRT BY **ANUJ MADAAN**. TIE BY **THOMAS PINK**. WATCH BY **HUBLOT**. TRAINERS BY **CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN**

"Blue is the colour, football is the game, We're all together, and winning is our aim..."

–CHELSEA FC SONG



ORANGE

Ever wonder why rain slickers and factory uniforms are bright and citrus-y? Aggressive tones are uplifting when the going gets rough. Fact. So the next time you have to sit through a never-ending traditional ceremony, opt for a classic pin tuck kurta in orange to get by.

KURTA BY **RAJESH PRATAP SINGH**. TROUSERS BY **GUCCI**. WATCH BY **OMEGA**. LOAFERS BY **TOD'S**



"We all live in a yellow submarine, yellow submarine, yellow submarine."

–THE BEATLES, "YELLOW SUBMARINE"

YELLOW

A colour that announces itself before you do, so wear one piece at a time. It's also casual, so trusted jeans and boots keep it in harmony.

JUMPER BY **CANALI**.
JEANS BY **PAUL SMITH**.
BOOTS BY **TOM FORD**.
WATCH BY **OMEGA**

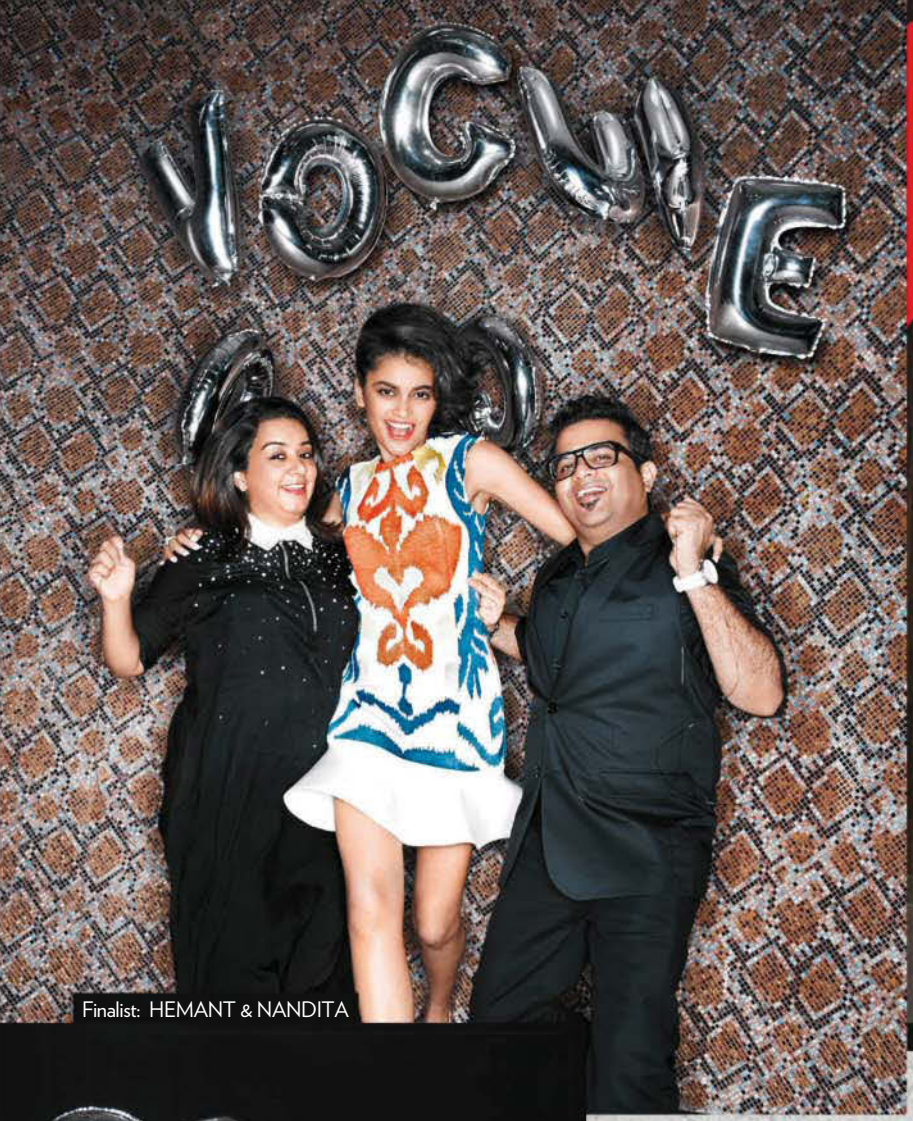
SCARLET

The colour of passion, sex – and your next summer suit. Take the plunge with Dolce & Gabbana's three-piece for a date with the devil in you.

SUIT BY **DOLCE & GABBANA**. SHIRT BY **ANUJ MADAAN**. SHOES BY **TOD'S**



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Finalist: HEMANT & NANDITA



Winner: BODICE BY RUCHIKA SACHDEVA



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QUIRK BOX BY JAYESH SACHDEV & RIXI BHATIA



Finalist: [KA] [SHA] BY KARISHMA SHAHANI KHAN



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THE UNMANAGEABLES

When a crusading but conflict-averse billionaire bankrolls several of journalism's most prominent mavericks to create a hard-nosed investigative news organization, it's a recipe for turmoil. eBay founder **Pierre Omidyar**'s differences with **First Look Media** staff have been all over the press. Two top hires are aready out the door. Can First Look Media make headlines that aren't about itself?

Written by **Sarah Ellison** | Illustrated by **Arun Jaitapkar**

Pierre Omidyar's office in Honolulu occupies the second floor of a low-slung and unassuming commercial building, across from a park and a school. Down the street is a row of simple restaurants, and when Omidyar is in town, the billionaire-founder of eBay often walks from his office to his favourite lunch spot, a place that he prefers not to have named, partly because he loves it and partly for reasons of security.

One morning in June 2013, just days after the first stories based on Edward Snowden's classified-document trove started appearing in *The Guardian* and *The Washington Post*, Omidyar received a call there from the Washington Post Company's chairman and CEO, Don Graham, who wanted to talk to him about buying the newspaper. The two had recently exchanged messages about the *Post* but had never before spoken directly. Omidyar was intrigued by Graham's passionate pitch for the kind of public-service journalism the *Post* produces. The two men continued to correspond over the summer. During those months, Omidyar read the autobiography of Graham's mother, Katharine Graham, who had been the publisher of the *Post* when the newspaper ran its stories on Watergate and the Pentagon Papers. As a memoir reader, he was all business: "I tried to skim through some of the personal stories, just focus on the newspaper ones," Omidyar told me when I visited him in Hawaii last fall. "I got excited about it."

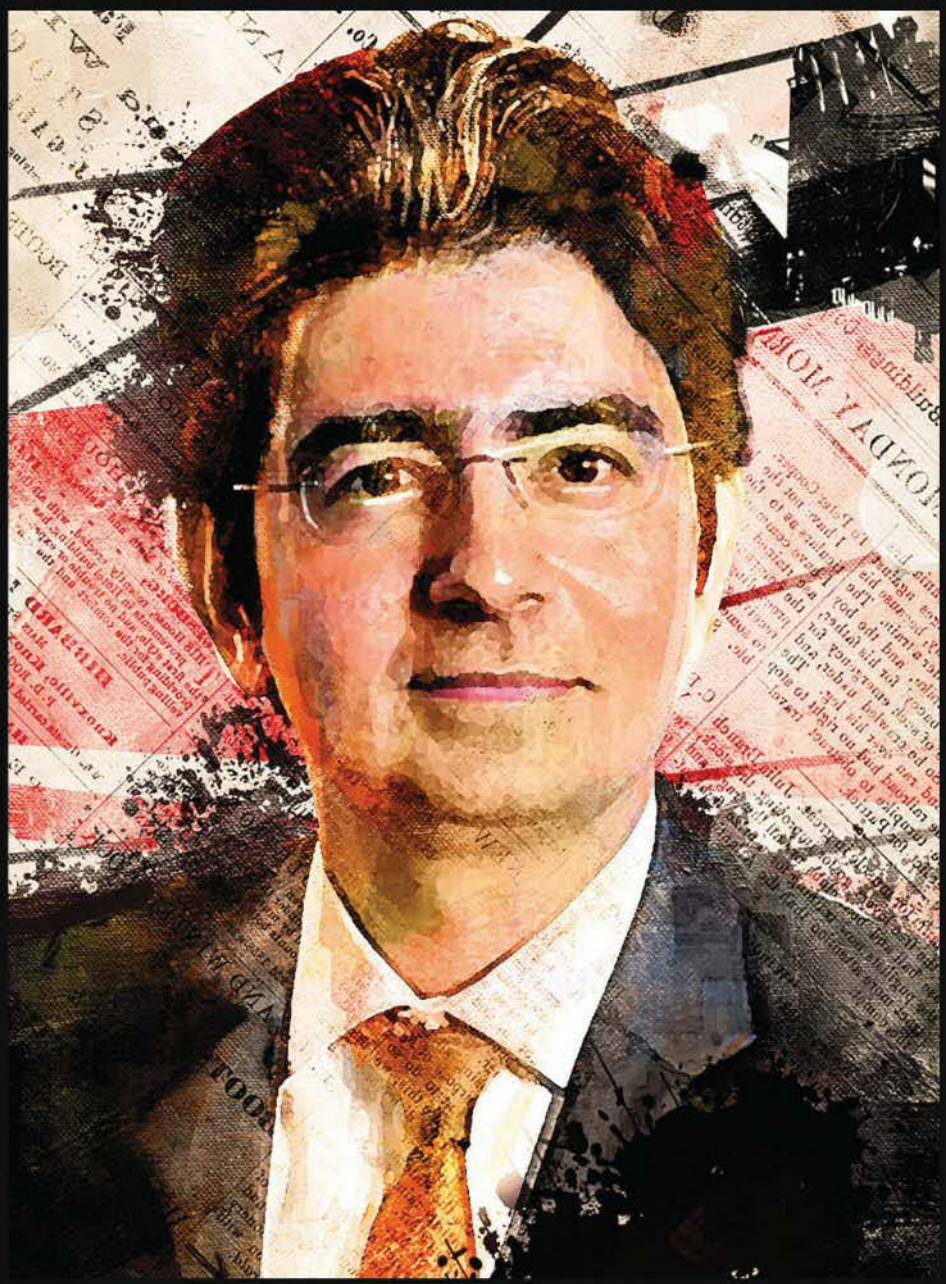
But it was not to be. In the end, Graham named a price that Omidyar thought too high. There was a larger issue, too. Omidyar is admittedly conflict-averse, and when considering the *Post*, "I just remembered instances in my history where, when people aren't fully aligned, when they haven't bought into the vision, it's really difficult and it's actually a little bit draining. It's not something I look forward to dealing with in the morning. I thought about myself actually in the role of leading a cultural transformation – that would mean dealing with talented people who fundamentally disagreed with me in some cases." When he imagined that scenario, he realized that he wanted to avoid it. "I said, OK, fine, that's maybe not a great idea." He indulged a small laugh. "Ultimately I think sanity returned."

Don Graham ended up selling the *Post* and some affiliated publications to Amazon founder Jeff Bezos for $250 million. But the discussions with Graham had solidified Omidyar's resolve to dive deeper into the world of journalism. Soon afterwards, Omidyar pledged to start his own news organization and match Bezos' investment in the *Post*. He enlisted two of the journalists who had reported on the Snowden documents: Glenn Greenwald, an aggressive and sometimes strident columnist and former lawyer, who had been writing a column for *The Guardian*'s US edition, and Laura Poitras, an Academy Award-nominated documentary film-maker, who had been the first journalist to take Snowden seriously, and who did the most to bring his revelations to light. They were joined by Jeremy Scahill, another Academy Award-nominated documentary film-maker and a writer for *The Nation*, who had also cultivated an aggressive persona and strong relationships with national security whistle-blowers. Omidyar announced that the new endeavour would have a "core mission around supporting and empowering independent journalists across many sectors and beats."

As Omidyar has by now discovered, starting an organization from scratch was hardly a safeguard against dealing with people who fundamentally disagreed with him. First Look Media, as Omidyar's enterprise has come to be called, is beset by staff turmoil and dissatisfaction. One of its most high-profile journalists, former *Rolling Stone* writer Matt Taibbi, left last October after clashing with Omidyar and his deputies amid allegations of insubordination and possibly gender-based hostility on Taibbi's part. John Cook, Editor-in-Chief of what is so far First Look's only publication, *The Intercept*, left the site to return to his former employer, the gossip-and-news site *Gawker*. These departures have laid bare how Omidyar's process-driven approach to management clashed with the ways of the independent-minded journalists he hired. In many respects, the current turmoil was entirely predictable. "He hired a newsroom of unmanageables," one veteran newspaper editor told me. More specifically, Omidyar is attempting to create a news organization with the help of individuals who have made their careers eschewing – when not mocking – news organizations of all stripes.

When the news of Taibbi's departure broke in New York, four of those individuals – Poitras, Greenwald, Scahill and Cook – wrote a detailed retrospective on the goings-on at First Look, and then dared to publish it on *The Intercept*. The article located the dispute with Taibbi within a larger one: the journalists who joined First Look thought they were getting something "freewheeling" but instead had been met with "a confounding array of rules, structures and systems imposed by Omidyar and other First Look managers." →





The article was journalistic independence as performance art, an act of self-conscious insubordination to defend a fallen comrade – Taibbi – and salvage the autonomy, or at least the appearance of it, that the entire venture had been founded on. It was also a kind of test for Omidyar. That the four of them weren't disciplined or fired reveals something fundamental about the strange stand-off at the heart of the enterprise.

First Look began in the fall of 2013, amid a flurry of enthusiasm over the Snowden revelations, and amid intense pressure to keep publishing stories based on his vast cache of documents. An early rush to hire staff – less than two dozen all told – was quickly followed by a period of caution and circumspection as Omidyar began to think afresh about how he wanted his new journalism venture to look: the kind of thinking that everyone agrees would have been helpful to work out earlier. The problems at First Look are many, including an essential culture clash between people who appear to have antithetical opinions about everything from management style to subject matter to seating arrangements to whether journalists should have landlines. Disagreements over "process" have been at once petty and paralyzing.

Here's the basic recipe: Combine two types of strong-willed visionary – one cool and analytical, the other fervent and outspoken. Add a dash of messianic outlook to the ingredients. Heat under pressure. Could the result have turned out any other way?

I first met with Omidyar, who is 47, last September, in a small conference room in his Honolulu office. He did not exactly look strong-willed or visionary. He wore a blue polo shirt, jeans, a red woven necklace and a wooden beaded bracelet. His dark hair, which he once wore in a ponytail, was cut short, a streak of grey above his forehead. He is a fan of *Battlestar Galactica* and occasionally referees his children's soccer games. The laid-back effect gives no hint of his drive or his fixity of purpose. Omidyar told me that early on in his professional life he wanted to be removed from Silicon Valley in order to "have space to think" and to get away from the Valley's increasing focus "on money and wealth". In 2006, he moved to Hawaii, where both his wife Pam and he had spent parts of their childhood. The couple bought a home in the upscale Kahala neighbourhood of Honolulu. Omidyar also reportedly owns a 640-acre ranch in Montana, a place that could serve as his solar-powered safe house. He keeps two private jets in Hawaii. This is a man with a world view and opinions about the future.

Pierre Morad Omidyar was born in Paris in 1967 to well-to-do Iranian immigrants who had gone to France for university. His mother, a linguist, would eventually earn her PhD at the Sorbonne. His father attended medical school. When Omidyar was six years old, the family moved to Washington, DC, so his father could begin a residency at Johns Hopkins. His parents separated when he was young. According to the book *The Perfect Store: Inside eBay*, in seventh grade, Omidyar would sneak out of gym class to play around on his science teacher's Radio Shack TRS-80. He taught himself basic programming. The next year, in eighth grade, Omidyar and his mother moved to Hawaii so his mother could pursue fieldwork. He attended the prestigious Punahou School (Barack Obama's alma mater – Obama had graduated the year before); completed high school at St Andrew's Episcopal School in Potomac, Maryland; and went on to college at Tufts, where he met Pam, who was studying biology (she went on to get a Master's in plant molecular genetics from UC Santa Cruz). The summer of his junior year, Omidyar got an internship as a Macintosh programmer in Silicon Valley. The internship turned into a job, and he took a semester off from school to keep it. Omidyar finished up college at UC Berkeley.

After graduation, Omidyar found work for a short time at an Apple subsidiary called Claris. From Claris, he launched a start-up (for pen-based computing, later popularized by Palm), which was eventually bought by Microsoft, making Omidyar a millionaire before he was 30. Omidyar was one of the many programmers of that era looking for a new business idea, and he found it over Labor Day weekend in 1995 when, in the extra bedroom of his townhouse, he created a clunky auction site that allowed internet users to buy goods from one another. He called it Auction-Web – an early iteration of eBay.

Two years earlier Omidyar had met a Stanford business school graduate, Jeff Skoll, now chairman of Participant Media, who was working at the time for Knight Ridder, attempting to develop the company's internet strategy. Skoll was initially sceptical about eBay, but he eventually went to work for Omidyar as eBay's first employee. Skoll talked to me about how revolutionary (and counter-intuitive) the idea behind eBay – allowing total strangers to exchange goods – seemed in the Nineties. "It was a time when nobody trusted the internet," he recalls. Omidyar's key insight was that "people are generally good and if they have information they'll act on it."

"I CREATED THE COMPANY [EBAY] IN SEPTEMBER OF 1995... IT WAS PUBLIC IN SEPTEMBER OF '98. I MEAN, IT'S INSANE."
—PIERRE OMIDYAR

eBay went public in 1998, making Omidyar a billionaire. Omidyar is conscious of his rapid rise to wealth: "I created the company in September of 1995... It was public in September of '98. I mean, you are talking three years of operation, right? I mean, it's insane." He is worth roughly $8 billion today. Omidyar gave up day-to-day responsibilities at eBay in 1999 (though he remains the company's chairman). Pam and he spent the next 15 years devoted to building a number of philanthropic endeavours that became the Omidyar Group. They have dedicated $1.5 billion to these causes and other public-service ventures.

Then, like billionaires before him, Pierre Omidyar caught the media bug.

Omidyar recalls that, even before the Snowden revelations, a series of aggressive moves by the US Justice Department had gotten his attention. The US federal government, in 2012, had wiretapped *Associated Press* reporters in search of the source of an *AP* story. Two years earlier, the Justice Department had named Fox reporter James Rosen as a "co-conspirator" in a leak case. Both episodes became public in the spring of 2013 and alarmed Omidyar.

Then he spent the summer talking to Don Graham, and watching the Snowden revelations unfold. "I think Don Graham sort of ended up getting a 'two for one' as far as the industry goes, right?" Omidyar says now. "Because he did the right thing for the paper, he got some new capital and a committed owner. And he got me thinking seriously about journalism and what I could contribute to that in the context of buying his paper. But then our tracks diverged."

Omidyar's track led him to Arianna Huffington, who in early September 2013 had flown to Hawaii to launch *Huffington Post Hawaii* in partnership with Omidyar's own *Honolulu Civil Beat*, an online investigative news organization established in 2010. *Civil Beat* was created to provide an alternative to what some saw as the relaxed "aloha spirit" of Hawaiian journalism. The co-founder, Randy Ching, is a former eBay executive, and the first editor was John Temple, who had been the editor and publisher of Denver's *Rocky Mountain News* and a top editor at *The Washington Post*. (Both men would figure prominently in First Look Media.) Huffington spent three days in Hawaii with Omidyar, flying together from island to island for a series of events to celebrate the launch. "Nothing was too much," Huffington remembered. "That's one of the things I love about him." During those three days, Omidyar says, he began to see Huffington as "a trusted friend and advisor". In New York, Huffington organized a dinner at her apartment so that he could meet various media figures. "It ended up being so many people I had to build a new top for the round table," Huffington told me. The guests included Facebook co-founder and *New Republic* owner Chris Hughes and his husband, political hopeful Sean Eldridge; *ProPublica* editor Stephen Engelberg and his wife, author Gabrielle Glaser; advertising executive and social-strategy author John Gerzema; political and corporate advisor Ian Osborne; CBS anchor and interviewer Charlie Rose; and Facebook COO Sheryl Sandberg. Omidyar, Huffington says, wrote copiously in a little black notebook that was "small enough to fit in a woman's purse". (Huffington says she has now bought the same kind of notebook to preserve a record of interesting conversations.) At the dinner, Omidyar didn't divulge his interest in launching his own organization, but the guests talked about the challenges and opportunities in digital media, and Omidyar's blood continued to warm.

Soon after, Omidyar and Huffington flew to Dharamsala, India, where the Dalai Lama was hosting a five-day Mind & Life Institute gathering of Buddhist monks and scientists. During the trip, the two discussed the difficulty of launching a destination news site. "That train has left the station," Huffington says she told him, meaning that unlike the *Huffington Post*, which had launched nine years earlier, when big niches were there for the taking, anything Omidyar did would have to rely more on social-media sharing to build an audience.

In September 2013 – after Huffington and he had solidified the Hawaii partnership but before they travelled to India – Omidyar connected on Twitter with Trevor Timm, a young lawyer and co-founder of the Freedom Of The Press Foundation, who tweets frequently on the media. The two e-mailed and eventually connected over Silent Circle in an encrypted video chat. Omidyar asked Timm, "If I were to create a new news organization, what kind of an organization would I have to create to support the kind of work that people like Glenn do?" "Glenn", of course, was a reference to Glenn Greenwald. A few weeks later, Timm got back to Omidyar and told him he should get in touch with Greenwald himself, noting that Greenwald and some colleagues were thinking about "some things that might be interesting to you".

Greenwald, Laura Poitras and Jeremy Scahill had in fact been talking about joining up to launch a new media outlet of their own. They had started to put together a possible investor list, which was how Timm knew about Greenwald's plans in the first place. "He was very humble," Greenwald told me, thinking back to that first conversation with Omidyar. (Again, via video chat. To this day, Omidyar and Greenwald have never met in person.) Omidyar said, →

"The Unmanageables" continued on page 230


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GROOMING

+ BACK TO BLACK? DON'T DO IT

COLOUR ME RAD

Maybe you dunked your head in a bottle of hydrogen peroxide when you were 17 and nearly burned your scalp trying to go blond. Your girlfriend dumped you shortly after you debuted your Eminem look. You're still mildly traumatized, but willing to give colour another go. Here are four GQ-approved looks you can pull off, even if you're not David Bowie. All you need is a little attitude (and patience)



BLUE DOG PRINT T-SHIRT BY **PEPE JEANS**

GQ TIP

Colouring Indian hair is a two-step process. First, it needs to be bleached, then coloured. So clear out your schedule for the day – the entire process can take anywhere between 45 minutes to four hours. The longer and thicker your locks, the more time it's likely to take.

MIDNIGHT BLUE

RISK FACTOR – 4/5

Sahil Shah, Actor/Model

DO IT IF: Subtle, sexy and a little bit mysterious is your style. (Think Jon Snow.) You could go brighter, too, but only if you're a Chelsea fan. The look works as well on long curly hair as it does on straight hair.

- Apply bleach. L'Oréal Professionnel Paris' ammonia-free Platinium Nutri-Developer (40 per cent volume) will get the job done.
- Your hair is wrapped in foil. You'll look like an alien/baked potato, but that's part of the fun. Take a #selfie. Your scalp will feel a bit itchy from the bleach reacting with your hair.
- Congratulations. You're now beach blond and ready for colour. Try L'Oréal Professionnel Paris' Majirel blue 2.10 for a raven black-blue: It'll look black, but with undertones of blue in the sunlight.
- To go brighter, spray on BBlunt's One Night Stand Blue Velvet colour. It'll wash out after you shampoo your hair, so re-apply as necessary. (They do a wicked green, copper and bronze, too.)

WORDS: SHIKHA SETHI; PHOTO: ARJUN MARK, PALLAVI KUMAR (PROCESS POLAROID); MAKE-UP: XAVIER D'SOUZA/FATMU



GOING PLATINUM

RISK FACTOR – 5/5

Mustafa Rangwala, Financial Consultant

DO IT IF: You're young but have the gumption to rock an older, cooler look. Silver grey isn't just for granddads and uncles anymore.

- The central section of your hair is sectioned off and bleached. The roots will remain black.
- Oxidant crème lightens it further.
- You want an ashy platinum, so pick L'Oréal Professionnel Paris' Dia Richesse 9.11. Something that says crazy, sexy, cool.
- You'll need a tight trim on the sides, with longer hair on top, to work this style. Avoid adding gel to the silvery section, or anything that fixes your hair too firmly in place. The look is bold but easy.

GQ
TIP
Colouring involves using chemicals – even ammonia-free products have a developing agent to bleach your hair – so taking care of it is essential. Try the Blondor range by Wella, or TIGI S Factor's True Lasting Colour shampoo, conditioner and hair oil. They'll nourish your hair and also help the colour last longer.

GREY TEE BY **PEPE JEANS**



"Your colourist is the best person to recommend the right shade for you. In general, avoid too much contrast between your skin and hair. If your hair is too bright, it'll make your face look dull and tired. Green tones suit Indians because they cut the red pigments in our skin; too much yellow, golden or blonde highlights the yellow in our skin, so go easy with these shades."
—Alex Rachid Redjem, Hairstylist

GQ TIP

The colour will eventually start fading, and once it does, you'll need a touch-up or a haircut. Don't subject the rest of us to those puke-coloured highlights while you wait for them to grow out.



THE NEW WAY TO DO HIGHLIGHTS

RISK FACTOR – 3/5

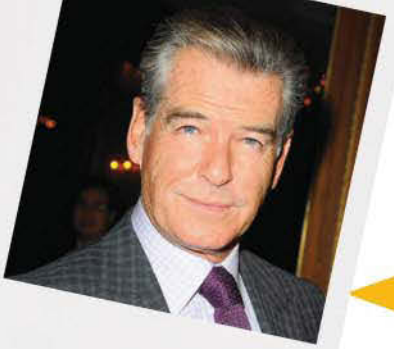
Owamir Afzal, Businessman

DO IT IF: You have lighter eyes and are up for a little experimenting. Just don't go Hrithik Roshan circa 2006.

- Bleach is applied in quick brushstrokes to the front and top of your head.
- Once your hair's lightened sufficiently, you'll need a coat of L'Oréal Professionnel Paris' oxidant crème to absorb the colour better. The brand's Cool Cover 8.8, a rich mocha, is a good colour to use.
- You're not done yet, though. You'll need to quickly bleach the rest of your hair to lighten it to a dark brown.
- The difference in shades – light and dark, but in the same family – will give your hair a textured feel without the need for any extra pomade or wax.

WORDS: SHIKHA SETHI; PHOTO: ARJUN MARK, PALLAVI KUMAR (PROCESS POLAROIDS); MAKE-UP: XAVIER D'SOUZA/FATMU





GREY MATTER

RISK FACTOR – 0/5

Rohan Sharma, Real Estate Consultant

"Genius and virtue are to be more often found clothed in grey than in peacock bright." –Van Wyck Brooks Here's how to rock your grey hair.

- Salt-and-pepper hair tends to be drier than normal hair and prone to frizziness, so use a hydrating product like L'Oréal Professionnel Paris' Serie Expert Silver Shampoo. It's a blue cleanser, which means it cuts the yellow tones that would otherwise make your locks look dull and faded.
- If you're aiming for George Clooney-dapper, you'll need a sharp haircut, with strong lines to keep things slick.
- When styling, use a shiny, not matte, wax to accentuate those silver/white highlights and prevent your hair from looking flat.

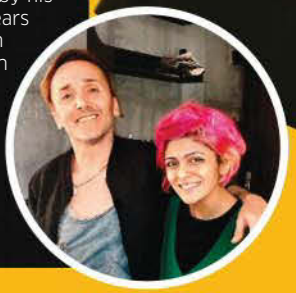
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HAPPY IN THE HEAD, BANDRA, MUMBAI

Helming Bandra's funkiest new salon is the elfin Avani Ashwin, who trained at the BBlunt academy before working at Mad O Wat in Mumbai for two years. She quit in 2011 to cut and colour hair from her terrace studio in Sion. At Happy In The Head, she offers cuts for men and women, starting at ₹1,000. Expect to chat about everything from improving your Texas Hold 'Em game to vintage stores in London. *Tel: 98196 22325*

THE HAIRSTYLIST

GQ's "Best Stylist" Alex Rachid Redjem has devotees, rather than clients, who swear by his cuts. He's got over 23 years of experience working in New York, London, Berlin and India, so if you're looking to switch up your look, book an appointment with him and then rest easy. *Tel: 98116 17476, or call Looks Salon, Defence Colony, Delhi*



BLACK PRINT T-SHIRT BY **PEPE JEANS**

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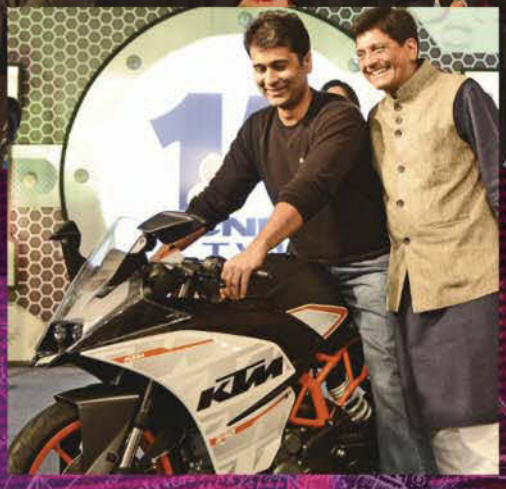
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50 SHADES

If you're a gentleman of a certain vintage, chances are you've stood before the mirror and asked yourself that most tortuous of questions: To dye or not to dye? GQ's silver fox **Anish Trivedi** resolves the dilemma



"How about some colour?" says the young lady standing behind me. "You look like you could use some." I assure her that my sun-browned complexion gets enough of a tan without my having to spend my Sundays sunning by the swimming pool. "Who's talking about your face?" she responds, a trifle too sharply. "I meant your hair. You're going really grey."

I point out that at least I still have hair, something a number of others of my gender seem to have trouble retaining. But in her role of my barber, she continues to expand on her thoughts. A lot of men are colouring their hair, it seems. And while they may choose to portray only Bollywood actresses in their ads, companies that manufacture hair colour make a killing from the equally misplaced vanity of men. I point out that I would look rather foolish were I suddenly to go from salt-and-pepper to sunshine blonde. She tells me it'll be a gradual process. Every week a little more black will be brushed in until no one will recall me looking any different. I listen to her carefully. And then I decline.

There are two types of men in this world: There are those that colour their hair. And then there are *real* men. We don't have cosmetic surgery to remove the wrinkles we pick up on our weary journeys through this world. We don't get tummy tucks and liposuction to counter a lifetime of excess. We don't suddenly learn to salsa in the hopes of picking up chicks. And we don't believe salt and pepper only belong on the dining table.

There are two types of men in this world: There are those that colour their hair. And then there are real men. And we don't believe salt and pepper only belong on the dining table

I don't for a moment suggest we give up the fight against looking our age. Those trips to the gym to keep things tight? Absolutely essential. That solitary sail or walk through the woods to rejuvenate the soul? Almost mandatory. Skinny jeans? Well, maybe don't go that far.

But seriously. Look at every statement made by a woman, young or old of an undisclosed age, on the subject of a man's hair. Every one of them says they like the greying look. How it gives a man character. How it makes him appear distinguished. How it makes him seem sexier.

I ask a friend, a woman I know who has long been the subject of men's fantasies, why this is. Simple, she says. She wouldn't trust a man who darkened his locks. If he's trying to cover up the real colour of his hair, what else is he lying about? I point out gently that men lie about pretty much everything when talking to a woman they're trying to impress. She smiles. Pats me gently on the arm. And asks if we think women don't know that. Inflating your bank balance is acceptable, she says. Exaggerating your prowess at polo is expected. Even stuffing a sock down the front of your jeans is forgivable. But colouring your hair? That's cheating.

So I turn to a man I know, a man who sports a mane as black as his heart, and ask why he does it. Because it makes him look like the youngest chairman of a company ever, he says candidly. People look at him in awe, remarking on his youth. Newspapers run on about the tender age at which he conquered the competition. Women fawn over him, flattered at the attention this virile captain of industry showers on them. I am amazed at his answer. Because he is delusional. There isn't a woman I know who'll stand by his side or step into an elevator alone with him.

Which means there is only one possible course of action you can take: Grow old gracefully. Accept the changing of colours the way summer makes way for autumn. Stop trying to hide behind hair that is a hue never once found in nature. Because here's what it says about you: You're comfortable. You're confident. You don't need any validation about who you are. The only support you need from a bottle is when it says single malt whisky on the label.

And as for the barber who'll tell you that you need some colour, there's only one solution, no matter how pretty she is, no matter how much she laughs at your jokes, no matter how soft her touch is when she brushes her fingers on the nape of your neck: Get a new barber. I did.

ILLUSTRATION: ARCHAN NAIR; PHOTO: MANISH MANSINH (ANISH)

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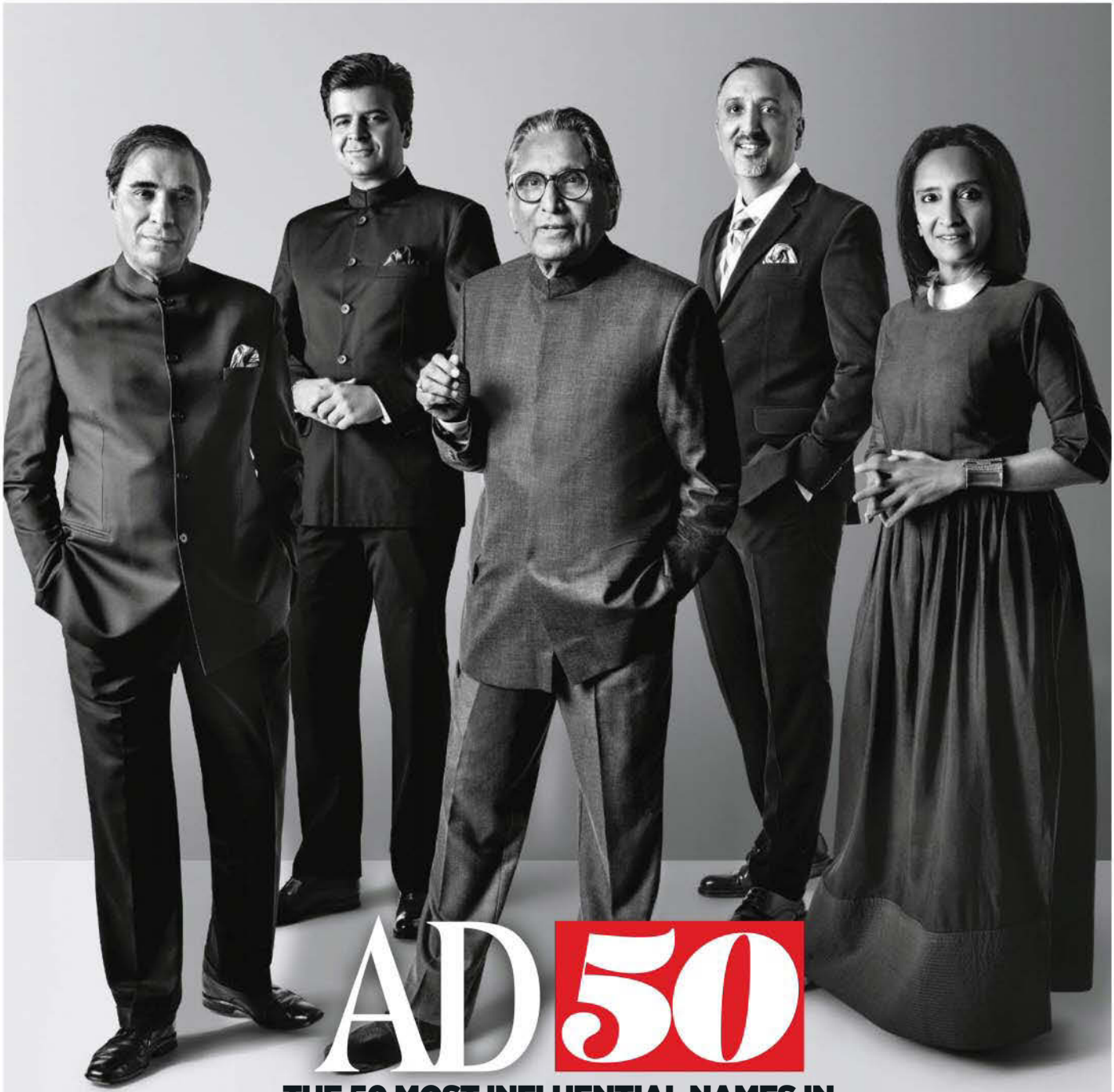
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An Artist and a Gentleman

ROCK AROUND THE CLOCK

Shooting artist Ranbir Kaleka at Delhi's **Hard Rock Cafe** proved to be quite a revelation

It's not an exaggeration to call Ranbir Kaleka a legend. At 60, the celebrated artist is a refreshing mix of grace and cool – with a hat collection that could upstage Pharrell's.

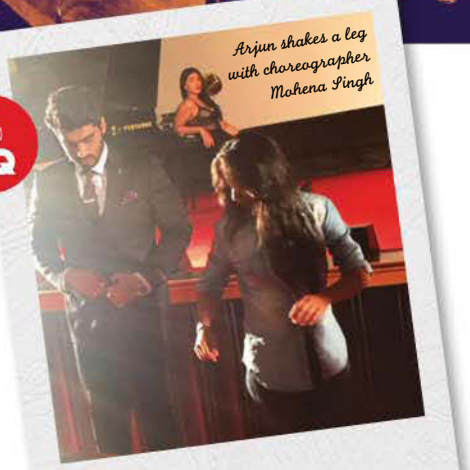
Having nominated Kaleka as *GQ*'s 2014 Artist of the Year, we took him to Delhi's Hard Rock Cafe for a shoot. By his own admission, Kaleka isn't much of a rock fan, but after he walked in with his Lock & Co hat box and chatted with us about art, culture, design and life over blues music, a cup of tea, some sandwiches and finger food, he walked away a rockstar in our books.



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Liberty Cinema's vintage interiors set the mood for *GQ*'s January 2015 cover shoot with Arjun Kapoor: think Fred Astaire-meets-Jay Gatsby. The star's inherent charm was an added bonus.

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"The Unmanageables" continued from page 213

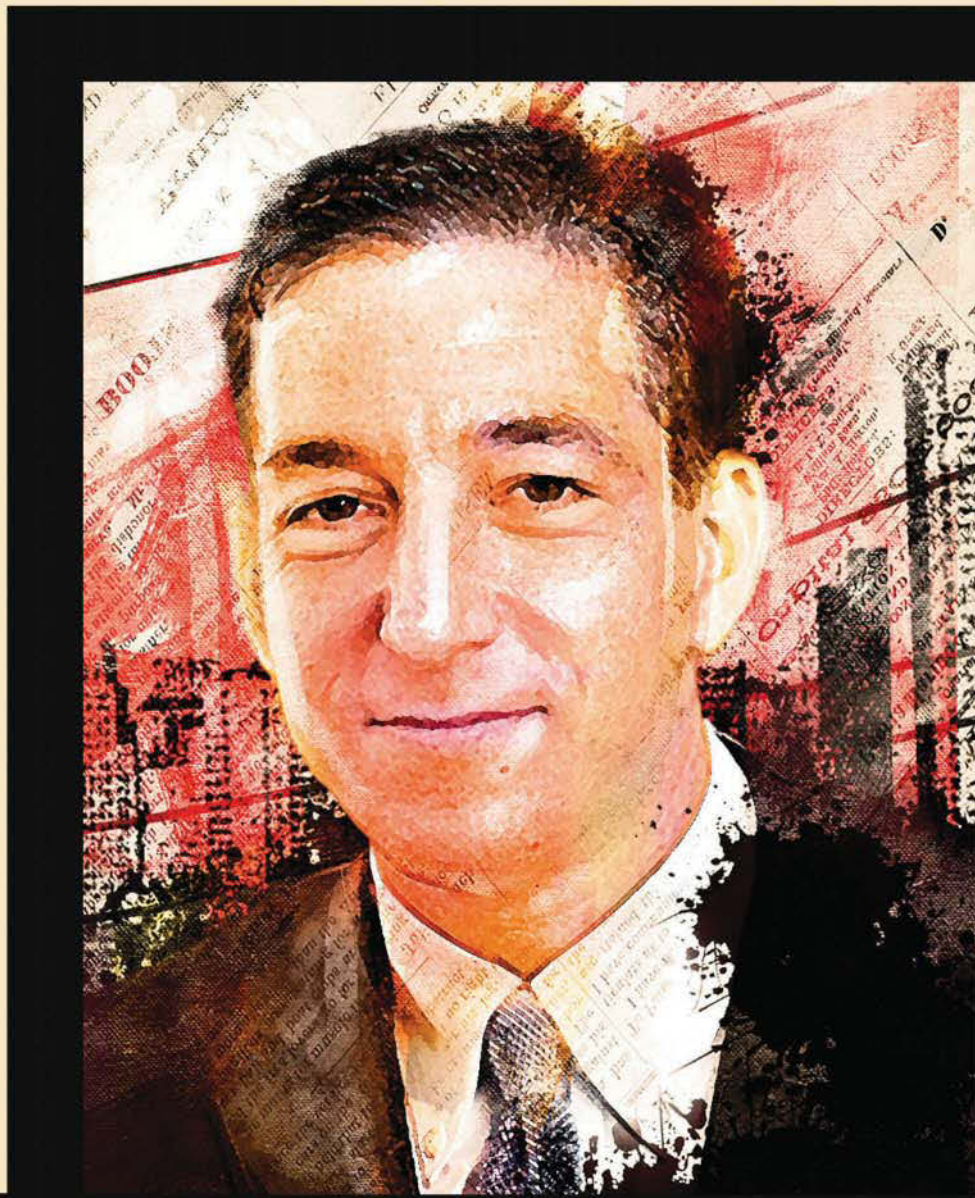
according to Greenwald, "I don't know if this is even possible, and you might laugh at me. But I was wondering if you would be interested in playing some role" in getting a new media organization off the ground. Omidyar told Greenwald that he wanted to use his background as a technologist and his reach in Silicon Valley to develop technology and software to revitalize privacy on the internet, and to allow people to come to journalists anonymously. Greenwald conferred with Poitras and Scahill, and they all agreed to cast their lot with Omidyar as long as they could continue to publish the Snowden documents – that was a given. Talks about what would become First Look Media now began in earnest.

For Greenwald, relationships with media organizations have always been uneasy. He had gained the attention of Edward Snowden through his fiery columns for the online publication *Salon*. In his articles and books, Greenwald railed against not just government surveillance but also civil rights abuses, US foreign policy in general and, as often as not, the "Establishment" press. His propensity for attacking *The New York Times* was athletic. No matter what the topic, he could work in a dig about the *Times*. When he started writing for *The Guardian*, he had worked out a relationship similar to the one he had had at *Salon*: His columns were unedited, except to address serious legal or journalistic questions.

At the time of Omidyar's approach, Greenwald and Laura Poitras had spent much of the previous four months in constant contact over the Snowden stories. Poitras, though perhaps more sceptical of the mainstream media than Greenwald, had worked to publish articles with *Der Spiegel*, *The Guardian* and *The New York Times* but remained independent and sometimes frustrated with the strictures imposed by big media organizations. Jeremy Scahill, for his part, had dropped out of college, worked in homeless shelters and was introduced to journalism as a volunteer for the nonprofit television news programme *Democracy Now!*. In 2007, he published a book, *Blackwater: The Rise Of The World's Most Powerful Mercenary Army*, which won a George Polk Book Award. He came out with a second book, *Dirty Wars: The World Is A Battlefield*, in 2013, and produced and narrated a film by the same name. The film, which focused on US covert actions and drone strikes, was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature in 2014.

Greenwald said to Omidyar that, if his two colleagues and he were to join the new venture, "we were going to need to launch in six weeks," Greenwald told me. The reason for urgency was to be able to continue publishing Snowden material without missing a beat. "He freaked out and said, 'That's a very fast timeframe.'" But Omidyar agreed to push ahead, and Greenwald went on a hiring binge. Given how rapidly the organization had come into existence, and how meagre the planning, people signed up without any real idea of what the site was going to be. Greenwald's first hires were Dan Froomkin, the Washington bureau chief of the *Huffington Post*, and Liliana Segura, of *The Nation*. Soon after came Eric Bates, from *Rolling Stone*, who had edited the financial writer Matt Taibbi and also the magazine's award-winning Michael Hastings story on General Stanley McChrystal. Bates, Omidyar told me, "was somebody Glenn could work with, which is important, I think. The editor-reporter relationship is critical."

Greenwald and his colleagues didn't get every prospective hire they wanted. "They came after everybody," said someone who was recruited. "When this thing came out, pick your investigative reporter and I think they approached them." Among those recruited was Matt Apuzzo, then at the *Associated Press*, who had shared a Pulitzer Prize for his reporting on the New York Police Department's surveillance of Muslim communities. First Look also approached two of Apuzzo's *AP* colleagues, who had won the Pulitzer with him: Adam Goldman, who would soon accept a job at *The Washington Post*, and Eileen Sullivan. First Look told potential recruits that it was building a site that would have *Huffington Post*-level traffic but with the smartest investigative reporters in the business. It seemed the organization wanted to recruit a group of big-name journalists



GLENN GREENWALD'S PROPENSITY FOR ATTACKING *THE NEW YORK TIMES* WAS ATHLETIC, NO MATTER THE TOPIC

and have them join First Look together. But Apuzzo balked at the numbers the First Look recruiter initially suggested for a salary – it didn't seem to take into account the risk of joining a new journalism start-up. In December, it was announced that Apuzzo was going to work for *The New York Times*. Omidyar also unsuccessfully pursued James Risen, the *Times* reporter who, back in 2006, shared a Pulitzer Prize for an early and crucial series on the Bush administration's warrantless wiretapping programme.

The earliest public word of the existence of First Look came in the form of a *BuzzFeed* story on October 15, 2013, revealing that Greenwald planned to leave *The Guardian* to help launch a new media outlet. Looking back, Omidyar told me that the timing was unfortunate because "it was leaked before we knew what the heck we were doing.

"The initial priority for us, for Glenn, was dominated by how we could create the operational and legal infrastructure necessary to responsibly report on those documents as quickly as possible," Omidyar told me. "That was really the operational focus of the first few months of the organization." He ultimately agreed to fund the appeal of Greenwald's spouse, David Miranda, who had been detained over the summer by British authorities while transporting Snowden-related material. Omidyar created a litigation fund to support press-freedom cases, with Miranda as its first one. In December, Omidyar began thinking about the "first incarnation" of First Look, beyond Greenwald, Poitras and Scahill, and beyond the Snowden documents. "Our best idea at the time was: We'll create digital homes that we'll call digital magazines for this collection of journalists around different topics." The early topics, in Omidyar's mind, were national security, the economy and finance, and then, potentially, sports and entertainment.

And the hiring continued. Within a few months First Look had hired Lynn Oberlander, formerly the general counsel of *The New Yorker*, as its legal counsel. Micah Lee, formerly of the Electronic Frontier Foundation, who had helped Greenwald with his encrypted communications with Snowden, was hired to set up online security, and worked from home in Berkeley. Omidyar had also approved Greenwald's suggested hiring of *Rolling Stone's* Matt Taibbi, who had once famously referred to Goldman Sachs as "a great vampire squid wrapped around the face of humanity, relentlessly jamming its blood funnel into anything that smells like money". Taibbi was to start a site focused on financial and political corruption – which eventually adopted a satirical tone – that came to be called *Racket*. Omidyar also approved the hiring of *Gawker's* John Cook to be Editor-in-Chief of *The Intercept*, the one First Look site actually up and running. *The Intercept* was dedicated to national security reporting and, in its early days, focused almost exclusively on the Snowden documents.

In January 2014, Omidyar asked John Temple, who was at the time doing a fellowship at Stanford, to join First Look's board. "I say, 'John, I need your help. We are trying to build an organization here, a journalistic institution, one that's going to have a large-scale impact over a long period of time,'" Omidyar told me. During their two years together at *Civil Beat*, they got along well, despite their different approaches. "Pierre likes systems and process," Temple told me. "I'm intuitive." Omidyar had been informally talking to Temple about his new venture since the previous August, but it was only in January that Omidyar asked Temple to officially come on board.

"I viewed the responsibility he had acquired as twofold," Temple, who lives in San Francisco, told me last August, when he was in New York to visit First Look's office there. He said to Omidyar, "Glenn is on the biggest story of his life, and you can't go dark. By necessity you need to create a platform so Glenn can publish." At the same time, "you have to be sure it doesn't dictate the future of the company." Temple argued that the security requirements and "workflow" of the Snowden documents couldn't be that of the entire organization. He set out to help Omidyar determine that "first incarnation" of First Look, beyond the Snowden documents. One of his initial tasks was to organize an event in Laguna Beach, at the Montage hotel, for Omidyar and – according to Stephen Buckley, then-Dean of Faculty at the media-focused Poynter Institute, who attended the meeting – about a dozen editors, journalism educators, industry analysts and former reporters, to hear Omidyar's vision for First Look, and to challenge him on it.

Around the time Omidyar was meeting in Laguna Beach, the physical reality of First Look was sitting in temporary office space in Manhattan. There were perhaps a dozen reporters in New York, all working under the supervision of executive editor Bates, as well as under Cook and Taibbi. The task at that point was to prepare to launch a number of digital magazines that would feed into Firstlook.org. Taibbi's site, *Racket*, was still officially unnamed, though Taibbi had hired Alex Pareene, from *Salon*, to be his executive editor. Meanwhile, Temple explained to me, all of *The Intercept's* founding editors – Greenwald, Poitras and Scahill – were busy on their own projects. "Laura is in Berlin making a movie. Glenn is writing a best-seller. Jeremy is at the Academy Awards," he said. "It's all stratospheric." *The Intercept's* first story, published in February, was a joint venture between Greenwald and Scahill on the NSA's role in the government's drone programme. Initially, the site published articles periodically, but the announcements of new hires seemed more frequent than the stories. The Silicon Valley site PandoDaily posted an item in April, "Glenn, Intercepted", noting that no new stories had been posted on *The Intercept* in nearly 10 days.

Even so, First Look kept growing. But it was hard to say who was running the show. John Temple was still finishing up his journalism fellowship at Stanford. Randy Ching, First Look's COO, was in California. And Omidyar was rarely seen in New York, though he and Temple met occasionally in the Bay Area. And if no one was running the show, it's also true that no one even knew what the show was.

Expansion without direction – it couldn't last. In April 2014, Eric Bates told Cook and Taibbi that Omidyar had put in place a three-month hiring freeze. If there was a specific need related to the Snowden archive, Bates said, then the hire could go through, but otherwise Omidyar wanted to buy some time to reflect. When Greenwald and Poitras came to New York to accept a Polk Award for the Snowden stories that had appeared in *The Guardian*, Greenwald, Poitras and Scahill arranged a video chat with Omidyar about the purported freeze. Omidyar said that there was no freeze and that there had been a misunderstanding. Still, John Cook and Matt Taibbi found it difficult to get hires approved for *The Intercept* and *Racket*. In June, Greenwald, Poitras, Scahill and Taibbi wrote a private letter to Omidyar expressing their displeasure. They complained about arbitrary restrictions on hiring and a lack →

of clear budgets for the two sites. The letter, after back-and-forth discussions between First Look journalists and management, resulted in a clear budget for *The Intercept* and increased autonomy. During this time, *The Intercept* was publishing significant national security stories, not all of them based on Snowden's documents. Over the course of a month – from early July to early August – *The New York Times* followed three such stories from *The Intercept*, and credited the site with breaking the news.

In late July 2014, Omidyar announced in a blog post that, instead of launching a variety of sites, First Look would be "building out" *The Intercept* and *Racket*. No other sites were immediately planned, and First Look would focus on experimenting with the technical aspects of distributing First Look's journalism, rather than simply creating new content. For some of the journalists who had joined the site expecting to be part of a large, reporter-driven and all-purpose media organization, the news came as a shock. Omidyar's technical curiosity about the distribution of news was trumping his interest in actual news, some of the journalists said. That impression was partly seeded by John Temple, who had become First Look's president in June. Shortly after he arrived, Temple spoke to the First Look newsroom about his recent stint at Stanford and an inspiring start-up he had encountered that created content for Oculus Rift 3D gaming headsets to put people into video virtual-reality settings.

Adding to Cook and Taibbi's overall frustration was a suggestion from First Look executives that journalists make use of specific computer programs and project-management software. The editors were encouraged to use a task-management system called Asana. It works like this: a person creates a task on Asana and invites relevant colleagues to join the task. The task has a deadline, and everyone invited can see the chains of conversation about the task. When the task is completed, a box is checked, and the task goes into an archive. Jeremy Scahill jokingly called the program "up your Asana". Matt Taibbi used the program so infrequently he had to be continually reminded of how it functioned.

ALL OF THE FOUNDING EDITORS WERE BUSY ON THEIR OWN PROJECTS. "LAURA POITRAS IS IN BERLIN MAKING A MOVIE"

First Look managers also encouraged the use of RASCIs – responsibility assignment matrices – to manage various projects, whether it was site design or promotional spots. The acronym stands for the five different categories of people on a given project: Responsible, Accountable, Supportive, Consulted and Informed. Although many of the journalists were not expected to use RASCIs very frequently, editors occasionally had to. In an organization that First Look editors had billed as non-hierarchical, the use of responsibility assignment matrices rubbed some people the wrong way.

By then, the First Look temporary offices had moved to a building in the Flatiron District, near Madison Square Park, in a space once occupied by Creative Artists Agency. Closed-door offices ringed the perimeter, and the centre of the newsroom was filled with high-walled cubicles. Over the summer, there were discussions about redesigning the office so it would have an open plan. Cook and Taibbi argued that certain journalists, such as those dealing with Snowden documents, would need to be in a closed office with doors that locked. What resulted was a compromise. Some journalists kept offices, but the rest were in the open newsroom. Some of the extra offices were converted to become "Zen" or "collaboration" rooms. A "seat-changing" party was also suggested, in which editors and reporters would throw their names into a hat and draw a new working space. (This party never took place.) A disagreement surfaced over whether the First Look journalists in New York should have landlines. Cook and Taibbi wanted them, but First Look suggested the staff just use their cellphones, and the company offered to buy phones for anyone who needed or wanted one. As a compromise, the company installed phone lines in "quiet" rooms where journalists could conduct interviews if needed.

As Taibbi's relationship with First Look's management was deteriorating, so was his working relationship with a female employee. When the employee, who does not wish to be named, complained about Taibbi's behaviour, Temple and Ching called a videoconference with Taibbi, and Temple launched an investigation.

What followed was a set of events that resulted in Taibbi's leaving the company, in late October 2014. On October 30, First Look's founding journalists – Greenwald, Scahill and Poitras, joined by *Intercept* Editor-in-Chief Cook – wrote an article, published in *The Intercept*, outlining the reasons for Taibbi's exit. "The Inside Story Of Matt Taibbi's Departure From First Look Media" described Taibbi's leaving as "the culmination of months of contentious disputes with First Look founder Pierre Omidyar, chief operating officer Randy Ching and president John Temple over the structure and management of *Racket*", the site Taibbi had been hired to create. "Those disputes were exacerbated by a recent complaint from a *Racket* employee about Taibbi's behaviour as a manager", the article maintained. Specifically, a female *Racket* staffer had "complained to senior management that Taibbi had been verbally abusive and unprofessionally hostile, and that she felt the conduct may have been motivated, at least in part, by her gender". The article also described the "confusion, differing perspectives and misaligned expectations" between First Look management and the editorial staff. It alleged that Omidyar personally signed off on routine expenses such as taxi rides and office supplies.

In preparing their article, the authors looked into the complaints against Taibbi. Insiders say they debated for days about what to include in their story. An initial version didn't mention the gender of the employee who had raised concerns about Taibbi. The authors circulated early drafts of the story among some *Intercept* staffers and, based on the feedback they received, particularly from women, determined that they might be seen as protecting a male journalistic star and ignoring the concerns of a female staffer. The final story was not reviewed by First Look's internal counsel before publication.

On October 10, according to the *Intercept* account, Taibbi left the office claiming he had been stripped of managerial responsibilities (a claim First Look managers dispute). Taibbi maintained that the woman's complaint was without merit. First Look, according to the article, determined that Taibbi was not legally liable for his behaviour, just a bad manager. Then Omidyar told him he could not return to the organization as an employee, only as a contractor who would not be managing other employees. This was not acceptable, and he left the company and published an article soon after in *Rolling Stone*. First Look declined to comment on the complaints referenced in the *Intercept* piece, or to say whether it has routine procedures in place

to handle complaints of this kind. The company also declined to comment on its own investigation, to say if it is complete, or to indicate whether the person who lodged the complaint against Taibbi is satisfied with the process.

After Taibbi left, First Look held an all-company meeting during which various employees voiced their displeasure that First Look's management had allowed him to leave. The woman whose complaint had triggered Temple's investigation stood up and said that the reaction she was hearing negated her experience. Another woman stood up and said that the whole episode made her concerned as a woman working in the company. The day the *Intercept* story ran, Nick Denton had breakfast with John Cook and offered him a job back at his old employer, *Gawker*, which he ultimately accepted.



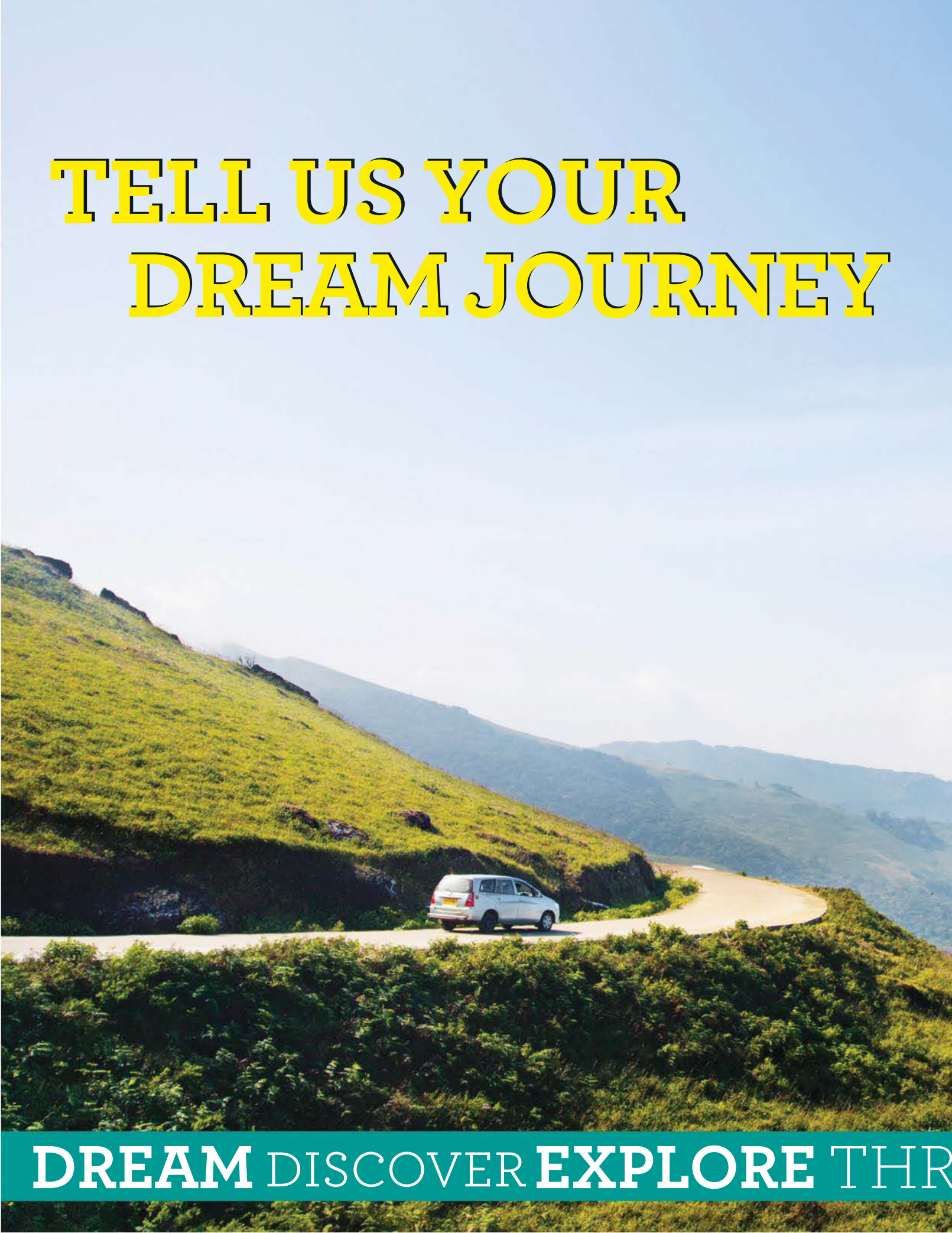
I asked Omidyar what he thought of the *Intercept* article, and he said, speaking carefully, "I need to be in a position where I'm supporting the work of our journalists and I have their backs, especially on high-stakes stuff. And I have no doubts about that."The national security reporting, he added, "is the stuff that really matters. It's their publication – they can publish what they want... So I'm not going to second-guess their decisions."

As for what lies ahead, the *Intercept* article noted that, after "months of disagreement and negotiations", the *Intercept* editors had reached an understanding with First Look executives and had been given a sizeable budget and autonomy to make decisions. The future of *Racket*, with Taibbi gone, remained unclear.

I met with Omidyar for a second time at the offices of one of his philanthropic organizations, Omidyar Network, in Redwood City, California. Asked about First Look's rocky start, he replied pointedly, saying that "building something from scratch is difficult." He noted that he had done it before. "Lots of people have done it before – but, actually, many more have never done it." He chalked up some of the difficulty at First Look to employees not understanding the normal chaos of building an organization. "Part of being an entrepreneur is taking on a large challenge – having a vision to take on a challenge – and then putting the pieces in place to get there. And a lot of those pieces are not related to the challenge that you're trying to address. They're the infrastructure of a company." He added that the normal difficulties of a start-up are exacerbated by building an organization "that has, at its core, a group of journalists who are doing the most high-stakes, difficult work that there is." He noted that building the organization was a challenge, but "a year in, actually, we're in really great shape." His overall outlook was one he had expressed to me before, when we spoke in Hawaii: "I'm patient."

Silicon Valley executives like to talk about how you aren't succeeding if you aren't failing at least some of the time. By that measure, First Look's first year is a towering success. Perhaps the tensions and battles between the journalists at First Look and their executive counterparts can be interpreted as the typical growing pains of a start-up, with Omidyar cast as the plucky entrepreneur at its helm, tinkering, adjusting and perfecting his model. But it's more likely that the misunderstandings at First Look derive from a fundamental philosophical divide between two groups. The journalists saw themselves as freethinking, independent and adversarial, and felt hemmed in by a process-driven management structure. For its part, management thought it was simply providing some much-needed organization – a system – within which the journalists could operate. The hubris that each party brought to First Look probably meant that self-awareness was not at the top of the list of personal attributes.

First Look now faces, at the very least, a difficult recruiting environment. The Snowden material will hold Greenwald and Omidyar together for the foreseeable future. But First Look's reliance on high-maintenance personalities made the turmoil it has experienced almost inevitable. Omidyar has learned quite a bit in the past year, and the lessons he takes away will shape whatever it is he's now left with. One of them may be that cultural transformations aren't easy, even when you're creating the organization yourself. And you have to wonder what Omidyar thinks now, as sanity returns, about that offer from the *Post*.


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Fashion exploration

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- **For more information, visit pepejeans.com or facebook.com/pepejeans**



Case of envy

You may not be the top dog at work (just yet), but that doesn't mean you can't feel like a boss with a briefcase that exudes extreme luxe style. And by that we mean the Hermès Cityhall Briefcase. Made with Sombrero calfskin and built for convenience with two flat pockets on the sides for instant access to documents and personal effects, it has a zipped centre compartment and is secured by an innovative lock and key system. It's simple, refined and looks pretty fantastic – after all, it is an Hermès.

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The world of music influences Hugo Boss' latest collection which features everything from half-lined coats to tumbled slim-fit jackets. Striking a fine balance between tailored and casual, you will see beautifully cut pantsuits as well as unconstructed jacket fits which exude a downtown-ready casual chic look. Boxy shapes on top, cropped trousers below, two-toned pea coats, leather varsity jackets, light wool polo shirts and unusual colour combos like flamingo pink over sand-tones are what you should expect from BOSS this season.

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Style, legacy and sophistication on your wrist – introducing the Conquest Classic Moonphase. Made as a part of the brand's Conquest collection and styled to represent what Longines likes to call "sporting elegance", this new model is dedicated to equestrian sports enthusiasts. It houses a self-winding mechanical chronograph movement L678, the case is available in steel, steel and rose gold or 18k rose gold and the black or silvered dial is set with nine applied indices coated with Super-LumiNova® elegantly contrasting the moonphase display. Watch connoisseurs, don't miss this Longines front-runner.

Price on request. For more information, visit longines.com

FORM IV
(See Rule 8)

Statement about ownership and other particulars about newspaper GQ (English) as required to be published in the first issue every year after the last day of February.

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I, Almona Bhatia, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Sd/-

Signature of Publisher

Date: March 1, 2015

GQ



Dear Greece,

Cradle of Democracy. Fountainhead of Western culture. Bastion of the sacred love between an old man and a debatably pubescent boy. You've given us Plato, Socrates and Rembetika; feta cheese, tzatziki and a film adaptation of *Zorba The Greek*, with a Mexican playing the lead.

We could go on about all the dope shit you've bestowed on the globe. We'd very much like to, in fact, but for the love of a weeping Markos Vamvakaris, man, where to begin with you these days? *Ay gamisou* – after your embezzle-friendly establishment made India look upright and forthcoming after 2008, you just about went bankrupt in 2010. Which led to austerity protests in Athens that made the state-sponsored beatdowns at the Seattle and Toronto G20s look like a lazy round of pétanque in the shade of the Acropolis. Even a coterie of 300 Spartans slathered in olive oil couldn't arm-wrestle global focus from what came next: a resurgence in failing-state things like Fascisto-rock and anti-immigration parties like the Golden Dawn establishing themselves in the time it takes to assault a foreign fruit vendor.

This was also about the time we started hearing about new kinds of drugs infecting the hallowed haunts of the Hellenistic capital. Like krokodil – a homemade opioid so devoid of upsides it was named for how quickly it turns your skin into lizard scales. This concerned us greatly because we'd only really heard of the stuff being available in the ghost towns of deepest Siberia. You know, out where the truly downtrodden and abject are forced to cop, the most ready references being asteroid crashes and gulags.

But now you've got a new, tottering but relatively balanced coalition of Left and Right, and the great purveyor of democratic rule has come together and grown a swinging pair of *malakas* – balls so big that even in the face of defaulting on 240 billion euros, you asked Germany for a paltry ten billion in reparations for a misbehaving Third Reich. Not even the neo-Nazi Golden Dawn could hope for anything more than a golden shower from Berlin upon such a request. Angela Merkel agreeing to that would be the stuff of Greek myth or, perhaps more apt, a scenario about as realistic as a Brothers Grimm book. (Speaking of fairy tales, we're pretty sure *Snow White And The Seven Dwarfs* is how Merkel envisions herself vis-à-vis her counterparts in Brussels, and has thus been able to suffer the Berlusconis and Sarkozys of the world.)

So, Greece, now that you've got Germany, head banana of the EU Council, cockblocking you, you're fucked, and the pull-out method is a worse choice than riding a fecund Venus de Milo bareback and keeping it in until the end. And anyways, apart from your EU creditors, who else has the hands to stroke your limp economy back to an acceptable turgidity? What's that, you say? You're thinking of accepting China's help? Wouldn't recommend that. Look at Africa. All that Chinese infrastructure on the Mother Continent is what the United States did in Europe after WWII, making sure everyone owed them something. That's what made them a world power. The Chinese are just doing it without having to fight a war. You can't trust China.

The Americans? They'd only be lending you Chinese money. No, no, no.

Russia? You can't be serious. Your coastlines are even better suited to submarine attack routes than Ukraine's. You know what Putin did up there, and if you'd been watching closely, you would've asked how all that krokodil got onto your streets in the first place, and traced the flesh-eating recreational drug back to the Russian cook-ops. Plus, Moscow's so broke they'll probably be lending you your own junkies' money.



Look, no one's cheering for a Greek Tragedy here, but a Mediterranean Elysium looks as distant as it was when you guys first dreamed it up, just about the time you dreamed up our preferred god of yours, the venerable and always cheery Bacchus. Just ask yourself: What would Bacchus do?

The rest, we leave to you.

Opa!

GQ India

WORDS: DAVE BESSELING; IMAGE: GETTY IMAGES



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